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Staff and students return to in-person learning

SUE TIFFIN

Staff Reporter

More than 100,000 students from across Ontario returned to in-person learning on Monday morning [Jan. 25], including those from Haliburton County's five elementary schools and one high school.

Trillium Lakelands District School Board announced last Wednesday [Jan. 20] that Haliburton's Stuart Baker Elementary School, JD Hodgson Elementary School and Haliburton Highlands Secondary School, Minden's Archie Stouffer Elementary School, Cardiff Elementary School and Wilberforce Elementary School would all re-open for in-class learning following an extended Christmas closure, brought on by the provincial lockdown enacted on Dec. 26 to stem the spread of the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a statement to media on Sunday [Jan. 24], Ontario's Minister of Education Stephen Lecce said the provincial

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Taking winter in stride

Haliburton residents Annika Gervais, left, and mother Karen run together on Saturday, Jan. 23 at Glebe Park. Despite the negative 20 Celsius degree temperature, the sun shone against a blue sky, making for beautiful conditions. /DARREN LUM Staff

Haliburton hospital ready to accept patient transfers from GTA

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Following another weekend of almost 5,000 new cases of COVID-19 across Ontario and a further 102 deaths, health officials are preparing for the worst with many hospitals, particularly in the GTA,

dangerously close to being overrun by this second wave of the pandemic.

While we aren't considered to be in a critical stage here in Haliburton County, staff from Haliburton Highlands Health Services [HHHS] have confirmed the local hospital is on stand-by and may be directed to accept patients from outside the community "at any time."

Carolyn Plummer, president and CEO

of HHHS, informed the *Echo* over the weekend that staff at the local hospital are prepared to step up if they are needed.

"The high number of cases in Toronto and surrounding areas has led to an increase in hospital admissions, including ICU admissions, in the GTA, which is putting pressure on the overall health

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Severity of mental health cases increasing in Haliburton County

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Since April of last year, the Canadian Mental Health Association of Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge has offered support to 160 individuals from across Haliburton County.

Unsurprisingly, the organization has seen a “slight uptick” in the demand for services since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic last spring, but more concerning for Jack Veitch, manager of community engagement and education with the local CMHA branch, is the severity of many of those cases.

“We have supported quite a number of people – for Haliburton, I would say 160 people is a pretty strong number,” Veitch told the *Echo*. “We’ve seen a slight uptick in volume, and we’re seeing that both for our general service, and also our crisis service. I think what’s most important to note, however, is that it’s not even that the general volume is increasing, it’s that the volume of intensity of need is increasing too. Even if it’s not necessarily a huge spike in the number of people requiring our services, the needs of those who are reaching out are becoming much more intense and complex, especially due to the pandemic’s effect on our health and wellness.”

Thursday [Jan. 28] marks the 11th iteration of Bell Let’s Talk Day. Over the course of the day, Bell will donate five cents from every text message, mobile and long distance call made by Bell wireless and phone customers and five cents from every tweet, TikTok, Snapchat and Instagram posting containing the hashtag #BellLetsTalk.

All money raised through the initiative will be reinvested back into different mental health programs and initiatives all over Canada. Since launching in 2010, the event has provided more than \$113 million to 775 organizations nationwide. Last year, Bell committed to funding its Let’s Talk initiative for a further five years, a move that is expected to take their total investment to at least \$155 million.

Some of that money has trickled down to the CMHA here in Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge in previous years, Veitch says, supporting much-needed crisis intervention clinics and other programs. He confirmed the association would once again apply for funding in 2021.

“It’s definitely our view to be applying again to support some of the programs we want to deliver. I don’t have anything I can share right now, but in a more general sense organizationally, we want to look at all avenues to continue doing what we do, and expand our services across the region,” Veitch said.

CMHA offers a wide-variety of programs and services in Haliburton County, including the At Work/Au Travail Employment Program, designed to provide specialized vocational assistance to those seeking opportunities to enter or reintegrate into the workforce; Four County Crisis, which provides a continuum of comprehensive crisis response services to individuals with serious mental health illness, mental health concerns and individuals in crisis; Gender Journeys, which provides programming, education and support services for those who are transgender, 2-spirit, gender diverse and individuals who are questioning their gender identity; Peer Support, which

brings an individual who has experienced a mental health concern, or have a close relationship with someone who has experienced a mental health concern face-to-face with an individual who is struggling in the hopes it can help provide better outcomes; and various community engagement and education workshops and training sessions designed to teach people about mental health.

The local association is also one of eight partner agencies involved in a four-county rapid response treatment and education service for young people called Lynx – Early Psychosis Intervention. Designed for individuals between the ages of 14 and 35, the initiative works on the basis that early identification, assessment and treatment can lead to significantly improved outcomes for individuals suffering with a psychotic illness.

“We assist anyone 16 years of age and older, to help them with whatever goals they may have. We help people manage symptoms of serious mental health concerns or illness. We help people with housing, with their vocation, we help people involved in the justice system,” Veitch said. “We have a 24-hour crisis line that’s open seven days a week, 365 days a year that people can call if they’re struggling, or need help, whatever the case may be.”

Veitch said the local CMHA also has a “boots on the ground” case manager who works intensively with people one-to-one to help them through their issues.

While he believes those who need mental health supports should absolutely seek them out, Veitch says he doesn’t buy into the idea that mental health can only be improved by way of professional assistance.

“I think there is certain credence to the

idea that we can do things independently to benefit our mental health. I would think if I’m exercising, keeping active, making sure I’m eating properly, making sure I’m connecting with peers and getting adequate sleep – those are things I can do that are going to take care of my mental health,” Veitch said.

“What I would suggest though, if it’s becoming problematic, the last thing you want to do is bottle things up, or not reach out for help. Mental health is like any other illness. Most illnesses left untreated over a period of time, more often than not, the symptoms will get worse. Mental health is no different,” Veitch added. “If you leave those symptoms untreated over time, they’re going to worsen.”

There are some easy-to-spot signs that can indicate someone is struggling with their mental health, Veitch points out.

“There are always things – the one people can often look to is isolation, or withdrawal. Changes in appetite is another big one, or lack of interest in appearance or activities that would otherwise have caused excitement,” Veitch said. “The one I always come back to and remind people of is a major change in baseline behaviour. Seeing a person change their behaviour in a way that may be abnormal for them is a major red flag. That may be an indicator, to me, to start a conversation and see how they’re doing.”

When it comes to mental health, now more than ever, every action counts. Whether big or small, our actions can make a big difference in moving Canada’s mental health forward.

Local health unit provides clarification on when businesses can reopen

“The Echo has received several questions in recent weeks, asking when local businesses will be able to reopen. Bernie Mayer, manager of health protection with the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit offered these answers.”

Q) Initially, businesses were to be able to reopen on Jan. 23 after the Dec. 26 lockdown measures - is that still possible, or does the state of emergency/stay-at-home order trump that?

Currently, we are dealing with a number of different pieces of provincial legislation and orders. All work in combination to help control the spread of COVID-19, and each must be complied with.

Most of the orders under the Reopening Ontario Act (ROA) are extended to Feb. 19. This legislation first came into effect last summer and includes measures on how different businesses can open and operate during the pandemic.

The province implemented a COVID-19 shutdown on Dec. 26, given a worrying rise in COVID-19 cases. On Jan. 12, the Ontario government further declared a State of Emergency (including Stay-at-Home Order) due to the continuing – and alarming – increase in COVID-19. These measures were put in place to:

Keep people at home as much as possible and save lives; stop the spread of COVID-19 in communities; prevent the hospital system from becoming overwhelmed; and protecting vulnerable populations and those who care for them

According to the province, the enhanced public health and workplace safety measures introduced as part of the shutdown and state of emergency (including the stay-at-home order) “are antici-

pated to be in place until at least Feb. 11.” The province also indicates “the results of these measures will be evaluated throughout the provincial emergency to determine when it is safe to lift any restrictions, or if they need to be extended.”

As to when the orders may be lifted, the health unit has not heard anything otherwise. Typically, we are not given prior notice from the Ministry.

For a full list of current public health measures and restrictions in Ontario, visit the provincial government website.

Q) If so, at what point - based on what we know right now - will businesses be able to reopen - Feb. 11?

During the state of emergency, essential businesses are allowed to stay open to customers (with COVID-19 restrictions in place). Many non-essential businesses are still allowed to operate – albeit in modified format with restricted hours, curbside pickup/delivery only, etc. Other businesses/venues (like movie theatres, performing arts centres and ski hills) have had to close during the state of emergency.

When we get back to normal is really the province’s call. The Ontario government will review all measures based on COVID-19 cases and transmission rates, and will ultimately decide when the State of Emergency is lifted and businesses can resume normal operations.

Currently we know the Reopening Ontario Act is extended to Feb 19, while the state of emergency (including stay-at-home order) is in effect until Feb 11. There is still the chance these could be further extended.

Q) Some people have heard that our area is opening sooner, and some (Sir Sam’s ski hill) have said our area is opening later - Feb. 19 or 20.

As mentioned previously, the health unit can’t speculate on when it will be

back to business as usual. Lifting COVID-19 restrictions and the state of emergency is a provincial decision, and the Ontario government is the one that will make the final call.

First doses of COVID–19 vaccine arrive in local health region

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit received its first allocation of COVID-19 vaccine on Monday evening, with staff planning to start vaccinating residents of the area’s long-term care homes this week.

The local unit received 700 doses of the Moderna vaccine, with more potentially on the way next week. The vaccines are being stored at Ross Memorial Hospital in Lindsay, and will be delivered to long-term care homes by the local health unit.

“This is the day we have been waiting for,” said Dr. Ian Gemmill, acting medical officer of health for the HKPR district health unit. “We have been working with our local hospital partners and our long-term care and retirement homes to work out the logistics of getting this vaccine into as many arms as quickly as possible.”

It is expected that between 100 and

150 vaccinations will take place each day over the course of the next week, with residents of Pinecrest Nursing Home in Bobcaygeon, Hope Street Terrace in Port Hope and Maplewood Long-Term Care Home in Brighton were among the first group to be vaccinated.

As of press time, there was no word on when the first doses may arrive in Haliburton.

“Unfortunately, we know that what we have received will not ensure that all of our long-term care residents are vaccinated with this week’s supply,” Dr. Gemmill said. “We have had to determine priorities about which [homes] gets the vaccine first, and we are hopeful that we will soon receive more vaccine so we can complete the immunization of residents and staff of both our long-term care homes and retirement homes.”

There are approximately 1,600 residents living in long-term care homes across the region, with more than 2,000 staff working at those sites.

New chamber executive says she 'grew up' in Haliburton

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

It turns out that Haliburton's newest professional import has quite an extensive history in the local community.

Amanda Conn took the reins as executive director of the Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce earlier this month. It's an unfamiliar role in a familiar place for Conn, who spent her entire childhood cottaging in the Highlands.

"I'm from the GTA originally, but spent a lot of time in Haliburton year-round cottaging with my family. We were up here every single weekend of the year. I would say that I grew up here, even though I wasn't born here," Conn said.

She made her status as an adopted Haliburtonian official around six years ago, purchasing a home in the community. Having spent more than a decade forging a successful career in marketing, specializing in the technology industry, Amanda found herself at something of a crossroads as 2020 wound down.

Working remotely comes with its perks, especially if it means you get to avoid long drives down to the city, but Amanda found herself wanting more from her work life. Specifically, she felt a need to do more to help people – likeminded people with an interest in business.



Amanda Conn, the new executive director of the Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce, is excited to start working with the local business community.

"It sort of fell into my lap – literally," Amanda said. "I was looking through the paper one day and noticed the ad for the position with the chamber. Previously, when I was part of a smaller company, we were a member of a board of trade. I got

involved in networking events, different programs and it allowed my company to compete on a larger scale with larger companies, so I've always had a fondness for this line of work."

Given that jobs in her chosen profession are so few and far between in rural communities such as ours, Conn took the posting as a sign that, perhaps, this was simply meant to be.

"The more I thought about it, the more I loved the idea. I like to be involved in start-ups, I like to help businesses grow, succeed and deal with challenges," she said. "I know what it's like in the business world, and I know it's not always easy to see a way out when you're in the situation yourself. Sometimes it's nice to have that entity you can go to for ideas. I thought this would be really interesting, and a way I can contribute, be part of the community and part of networking opportunities for businesses in the area."

By now, she has spent two weeks on the job, learning the ropes and figuring things out. So far, it's been a giant learning curve, but it's one Amanda says she's thoroughly enjoying.

"Having been up here my entire life, I really thought I knew the area. But it turns out there are a lot of people that I don't know," Amanda said. "It's been great these first few weeks, I've received lots of warm welcomes, and I've been getting up to speed with the different programs and initiatives the chamber offers.

We've got a lot of irons in the fire right now. There's a lot going on, which is important because our business community, right now, has a lot of challenges."

2020 was a busy year for the chamber as they sought to support a business community decimated by the COVID-19 pandemic. While many of the programs rolled out, such as the BuyCloseBy and Barter Pay initiatives, will continue in 2021, Conn was quick to point out that additional supports could soon be available.

"We do have some projects we're trying to get funding for. We're working through some planning processes to get more money, so we do have some things in the works," Conn said.

Over the coming weeks and months, Amanda says she hopes to meet as many people from the local business community as possible so that she can start helping those who need to get back on their feet.

"In the coming months, I'll be connecting with our members with a focus on supporting them in achieving their business goals. Through current programs, new programs, advocacy and networking opportunities, we continue to be committed to supporting commerce throughout the Haliburton Highlands," Conn concluded.

For more information, visit www.haliburtonchamber.com.

Haliburton hospital can manage non-intensive COVID-19 patients

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system," Plummer said. "As a result, all hospitals in the province, including HHHS, have been directed to accept transfers from other hospitals if asked, and if we have open beds available, in order to help address these system capacity concerns."

Plummer adds that the direction received from the ministry of health suggests these transfers could include both non-critical medical patients, and also non-critical COVID-positive patients.

She confirmed that, as of Friday evening [Jan. 22], HHHS has not received any transfers from other hospitals as a result of this new directive.

The HHHS site in Haliburton currently houses 14 patient beds in their acute care and emergency departments. The facility also includes two beds in its palliative care centre. Plummer confirmed the hospital has not been able to repurpose spaces in its facilities, including its site in Minden, to create additional capacity due to staffing shortages.

"Similar to other hospitals, we continue to be challenged to have sufficient staffing to cover all of those beds, so not all of them are open at this time," Plummer said. "The number of open beds we have does fluctuate as our staffing situation changes. We are continuing to recruit new staff to help address these shortages."

As of Monday morning [Jan. 25], there are 23,620 unresolved cases of COVID-19 in Ontario, with 1,398 individuals hospitalized and 397 individuals in ICU. In total, 5,846 individuals from across the province have died since the onset of the pandemic last March.

demic last March.

Here in the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit, there are 99 unresolved cases – five of those in Haliburton County, 68 in the Kawartha Lakes and 26 in Northumberland County. There are two further probable cases within the region, and 139 high-risk contacts. There are 31 individuals hospitalized across the health unit, although which hospitals they are spread across has not, and will not be disclosed.

Plummer confirmed that, should it be necessary, HHHS could support an individual who requires hospitalization due to COVID-19.

"This depends on the severity of symptoms and the specific health-care needs of the patient," Plummer stated, after being asked if a Haliburton-based COVID-positive patient would be transferred to another facility. "We are prepared for and can accommodate patients who are COVID-positive, however should they require more intensive care, we would transfer them to a hospital with a critical care unit."

With the seven-day average of new daily cases falling to less than 3,000, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health Dr. David Williams indicated the current lockdown, which will remain in place until Feb. 19, has helped to stop the spread of this second wave of the coronavirus. Still, he said the province must cut its daily COVID-19 case counts to below 1,000 before lockdown measures can be lifted.

He called the goal "achievable", even though it's been almost three months since the province reported a three digit daily increase, the last coming in late October.

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New grants available for businesses impacted by second provincial lockdown

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Some of the local businesses hit hardest by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may be eligible to receive an extra helping hand courtesy of the Ontario Highlands Tourism Organization [OHTO].

The group, in collaboration with its six county partners, unveiled a new funding stream earlier this month, titled the Tourism Recovery & Innovation Program [TRIP]. Developed in partnership with Ottawa Tourism, the TRIP capital projects program is geared specifically to tourism-dependent small to medium businesses and provides non-repayable funding of up to 80 per cent of eligible expenses businesses occurred while modifying operations due to the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, up to a maximum of \$20,000.

An OHTO media release states the pro-

gram was created to help entrepreneurs offset costs related to one-time modifications and/or reopening costs, implementation of health and safety protocols and any digitization measures taken.

Applications for the fund opened on Jan. 15 and will be accepted on an ongoing basis until Dec. 31. Priority status will be given to eligible businesses who apply by Jan. 31.

"We are anticipating a high volume of applications and will be processing submissions on a first come, first served basis. If you are a tourism-dependent business located within the boundaries of Ontario's Highlands, we encourage you to apply today by visiting ComeWander.ca/trip," the release reads.

In order to submit an application, business owners must submit their business number, HST number and incorporation date; a copy of their 2019 financials; a copy of their commercial general liability insurance coverage, which

must be at least \$2 million; copies of all receipts, invoices and quotes they are looking to submit for reimbursement; and a 500-word summary explaining how the requested funds will be used, including a synopsis of how any project may help to protect jobs and maintain the visitor experience.

Elsewhere, the Ontario Small Business Support grant announced by Premier Doug Ford back in December, is now accepting applications.

The grant provides between \$10,000 to \$20,000 to eligible small businesses who have had to restrict their operations due to the latest provincial lockdown, which kicked in on Dec. 26.

The one-time grant is open to entrepreneurs who have fewer than 100 employees and who have experienced a minimum of 20 per cent revenue decline in April 2020 compared to April 2019. New businesses established since April 2019 will be eligible if they meet the other eli-

gibility criteria [less than 100 employees, forced to close during the lockdown.]

"Small businesses are the heart of Ontario's economy," said Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. "The Ontario Small Business Support Grant will help thousands of small businesses get through this difficult time, while strengthening our province's economic recovery."

According to Fedeli, the money can be used "in whatever way makes the most sense" for an individual's business needs, such as helping to pay employee wages, or helping to pay rent.

Businesses impacted by the lockdown, which will run until at least Feb. 19, are also eligible for additional supports, including a provincial program designed to provide rebates to offset fixed costs such as property tax and energy bills.

For more information on the various grants and supports available, visit Ontario.ca/COVIDsupport.

'Schools have not been contributing hugely' to spread of COVID-19, MOH says

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government was implementing various health and safety measures to ensure a smooth transition back to the classroom.

"Ontario has the most comprehensive and highest funded school safety plan in Canada," Lecce says. "In advance of a return to class, the government will be implementing provincewide targeted asymptomatic testing, more comprehensive screening protocols, and mandatory masking for students in Grades 1 to 3, [indoors] and outdoors where physical distancing cannot be maintained."

He added, "These new safeguards have been informed by medical leaders and the best available evidence in Canada."

Lecce pointed towards what he called the "successful" reintegration of students back into the classroom in September as proof that a return to in-class learning can be done in a safe manner. He went on to say that leading medical experts have stated that schools in Ontario "remain safe."

"School boards [are] reporting approximately 80 per cent of schools, at the end of last year, [did] not report an active case, and 99.6 per cent of students never having reported a case of COVID-19," Lecce said. "We will continue to review our plan and ensure it provides our schools with the latest safety measures and protocols so our students and staff have maximum protection."

The local school board confirmed on its website that bus transportation would be available for eligible students in Haliburton County as of Monday. Sinead Fegan, TLDSB communications officer told the *Echo* that the return to in-class learning was being viewed as a positive by many local families.

"For the most part, City of Kawartha

Lakes and Haliburton parents/guardians [were] looking forward to the return to school on Jan. 25," Fegan said.

While many parents expressed relief that their students – struggling with online learning, lack of childcare, working parents and inadequate internet availability – would be returning to in-person school, some questioned why schools were reopening during the province's second stay-at-home-order, when in most cases households are restricted from gathering.

Dr. Gemmill, acting medical officer of health for the local health unit, said last week in a press conference that a dedicated team from the health unit follows adherence to health unit guidelines and virus activity in schools and will continue to do so when school reconvenes.

"Schools have to be a priority because it's one of these things that is essential, it's not part of the stay-at-home order theoretically and if kids have to go to school then we have to be there to ensure the measures are in place," he told media.

Prior to the school break happening, Dr. Gemmill said very few cases of COVID-19 were attributed to school transmission.

"Am I worried that there will be a lot of outbreaks in schools if schools go back? The answer is from the experience we've had so far, it appears that schools are not contributing hugely to a spread, and it appears that we are not seeing outbreaks in the school setting," he said. "I am very concerned, very concerned, about social gatherings, about people visiting, about all the things we know happened over the Christmas [holiday], amongst, I'm going to say adults, primarily, that did cause a spread to occur and it did amplify the occurrence of this disease in the population. That's why we were getting up over 3,000, close to 4,000 cases in Ontario per

day."

In the health unit's jurisdiction, which includes Haliburton County, City of Kawartha Lakes and Northumberland County, Gemmill said in the past 14 days, "a handful of kids," under the age of 10, about six or eight, tested positive for COVID-19, which he said was "not very many at all."

"Before the break when school was in session, we did follow up with every single case that occurred in kids in schools, and while there were some cases, the cases were not associated with continued transmission within the school," he said. "In other words, yes there may have been a case acquired, I don't know, socially among kids being together outside the school, or in some other venue, maybe a family gathering or whatever, but there was not evidence of spread within the school. In other words we didn't have a lot of other cases coming out of the classrooms where cases had occurred. So that tells me, it's basically an observation, where there's a case in the school, if you do all the right things, you're not going to have much spread so that's why I'm hopeful that when schools reconvene that this trend will continue. It seems to be not the amplifier of disease that social gatherings, particularly of older groups, has been causing."

At the time when staff and students returned to school in September last year, there were no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Haliburton County, with 15 cases since March being reported as resolved, and the province reporting just more than 300 cases on Sept. 14. Returning to school now, on Jan. 25, there were seven current cases of COVID-19 in Haliburton County reported in the week prior, and the province was reporting confirmed COVID-19 cases that had decreased from a week prior, with a rolling average standing at just over 2,700.

In the evening on Jan. 22, TLDSB sent information reminding parents of the in-person start date of Jan. 25, and noting the standard health and safety measures that have been in place throughout the school year thus far as well as new measures that have put in place.

As before, parents and guardians must screen their child for symptoms every day before they come to school using a Ministry of Health Ontario COVID-19 self-assessment tool and students in all grades are required to wear a mask at school and on the school bus.

A new measure is that elementary students should wear masks outside during recess and breaks, with students need-

ing a mask break to be given a designated space that maintains a minimum six feet distance from others. Also new, is that secondary students outside on school property or leaving the property for breaks must wear a mask, and are not to congregate in groups larger than five and outside of their cohort.

"We are still in a stay-at-home order," reads the note home to TLDSB families. "Therefore, please do not congregate before and after school."

Public schools closed in Ontario last year on March 13, as the novel coronavirus first began to spread across Ontario. Schools opened again in September, with about 15 per cent of students in the TLDSB region opting to study virtually through the board's online program.

Schools in Grey-Bruce Health Unit; Hastings and Prince Edward Counties Health Unit; Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox and Addington Health Unit; Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit; Peterborough Public Health; Renfrew County and District Health Unit and the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit were expected to return to in-person learning on Monday. Schools in the Toronto, Peel Region, York Region, Windsor-Essex County and Hamilton public health units will be teaching classes remotely until Feb. 10. Students in northern Ontario were able to return to in-person learning earlier, however some health units opted instead to extend remote learning for students. The provincial government has said that in-person school attendance is optional for the 2020-2021 school year for both elementary and secondary students.

"This allows you to make decisions that work best for your family," reads the Ontario.ca website. Remote learning, either synchronous or asynchronous, or paper-based learning is available through TLDSB. For more information about local cases visit www.hkpr.on.ca.

For more information about COVID-19 cases in schools and child care centres visit www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-cases-schools-and-child-care-centres. Since March, 7,324 school-related cases and 1,632 confirmed cases in child care centres and homes have been reported on that site.

TLDSB COVID-19 information and updates can be found at tldsb.ca/covid19/.

For more information about the province's reopening schools information, visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-reopening-schools>.

- with files from Mike Baker

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Dysart continues 2021 budget process, tax increase sits at 1.2 per cent

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Dysart et al residents are looking at an increase of at least 1.2 per cent to the municipal portion of their 2021 property tax bill.

Gathering virtually earlier this month to discuss the second draft of the township's 2021 budget, Dysart councillors opted to add \$26,250 to provide additional support to four community organizations, create a \$10,000 economic development reserve fund, invest \$5,000 to construct a resting place for individuals along County Road 10, and allocate at least \$50,000 towards much-needed brushing and ditching work – with Kennisis Lake Road likely to be at, or near, the front of the queue.

At present, the municipality expects to spend a shade under \$17.2 million over the next year. A big chunk of that will come from taxation – residential, commercial and industrial, amounting to just over \$10 million. Around \$3 million will come from various provincial and federal grants, with close to \$4.2 million coming from other revenues.

When looking at the total pie and how the funds break down across Dysart's eight municipal departments, the biggest chunk of the funds, around 34 per cent (\$5.8 million), are allocated for transportation services – largely covering road maintenance and reconstruction. Next in line are protective services, coming in at 21 per cent (\$3.6 million), with environmental services close behind at a shade over 20 per cent (\$3.5 million). Recreation and culture amounts to just under 12 per cent (\$2 million), general government just over 8 per cent (\$1.45 million), and planning and development around 3 per cent (\$550,000). Health services comes in at .9 per cent (\$155,000), with social and family services rounding things out at .7 per cent (\$120,000).

In order to determine how much a landowner will pay in taxes, a municipality multiplies the assessed value of a property, as determined by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC), by the annual tax rate. MPAC last carried out property assessments in Haliburton County in 2016. The organization was due to update local assessments in 2020, but the process was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Using figures presented by Dysart treasurer Barbara Swannell, using a tax increase of 1.2 per cent, the impact per \$100,000 of MPAC assessment to residents' tax bills in 2021 will be \$3.60. According to MPAC, the typical residential property in Dysart was assessed at approximately \$193,000 in 2016. Using these totals, the typical ratepayer will see an increase of at least \$6.95 on their 2021 tax bills.

It should be noted that these numbers are not final, and will likely change before Dysart officially ratifies the coming year's budget. Councillors will meet for a third time to discuss the budget on Feb. 12.

Initially, local councillors were hopeful they could push through a budget that would see the municipality hold firm on spending in 2021, and freeze taxes in light of the pandemic. Swannell tabled a first draft of the budget back in December that included a zero per cent increase, but that grew slightly as council started making decisions over different projects.

Mayor Andrea Roberts, in particular, seemed to appreciate the work Swannell and municipal staff had done to present an "extremely prudent and reasonable" budget.

"There's a lot of pressures for people to pay property taxes, what with COVID-19. So we weren't going to come in with a high budget," Roberts said.

Roads

The areas where council did increase spending were seen to be important, especially relating to brushing, ditching and road resurfacing. The township plans to

spend \$1.5 million on 64 projects this year.

As explained by Rob Camelon, Dysart's director of public works, the municipality completes dozens of road restorations every year. Staff uses software to rank municipal roads and determine the order in which work is completed, and to what scale. A full report outlining the township's plans for the next two years is available online at dysartetal.civicweb.net/document/384817.

The big talking point during the second draft meeting centred around how much money council wanted to set aside for brushing and ditching. Camelon noted the township currently had an extensive backlog of roads that require some attention. Ward 4 Coun. John Smith suggested adding \$100,000 to the budget to help Camelon chip away at that backlog.

"To get the backlog cleared, \$100,000 could do a lot of good. I'm talking prep work only here, so drainage, clean up... \$100,000, I'd definitely take it if you were offering it up," Camelon said.

The township staffer says, when he budgets for this kind of prep work, he estimates it costs \$20,000 per kilometre for crews to go in and complete the clean-up.

In the end, council agreed to add \$50,000 to the budget, with the potential to add more following further discussion with Camelon ahead of that third meeting in February.

Speed study

Council nixed plans to contract an outside engineering firm to carry out a complete assessment of the municipality's road network, at a cost of \$47,000.

Prior to the decision, Camelon indicated this would be a worthwhile project to fund. Over the years, the township has received many complaints from area residents who feel speed limits should be reduced in different areas of town. Having a professional firm come in, study the area and provide recommendations would be a positive thing, Camelon says.

"Every section of road would be assessed, and that would give us guidance moving forward to deal with concerns of ratepayers on vehicles speeding and what signage may be appropriate," Camelon said. "... If we go through and 75 per cent of roads are fine the way they are and don't require any further investigation, then so be it, we've checked that box and we can move on. Down the road, we can say we've looked into it."

While most councillors supported the study in theory, they felt the money could be better used elsewhere, and were hesitant to make any decisions that could lead to further increases to the tax rate in 2021.

Camelon clarified that this speed study was not a must-have, but would make things easier for staff, and council, in the future.

"If we don't want to do this, that's fine. But this prob-

“

There's a lot of pressure for people to pay property taxes, what with COVID-19. So we weren't going to come in with a high budget

— Dysart et al Mayor Andrea Roberts

lem is not going away. We're going to keep getting the same requests from the same roads, so we better have a policy on [this], and soon," Camelon said.

Community grants

Volunteers with the Haliburton Sculpture Forest, Haliburton Curling Club, Haliburton Lake Cottage Association and the Rails End Gallery and Arts Centre will have had smiles on their faces after council ratified their individual funding requests, to the tune of \$26,250.

Rails End Gallery received \$6,250 to help cover escalating heat and hydro bills at the downtown site. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization has been limited in what it can do, with many regular annual fundraisers, such as the Haliburton Arts and Craft Festival, the Haliburton Drum Festival and Trash and Treasures, all cancelled in 2020.

Laurie Jones, the facility's executive director and curator, estimated expenses for the year would reach \$181,000, and she appealed to Dysart's elected officials back in December to increase the municipality's annual contribution to the gallery. In 2021, Dysart will provide \$56,250 to the Rails End Gallery.

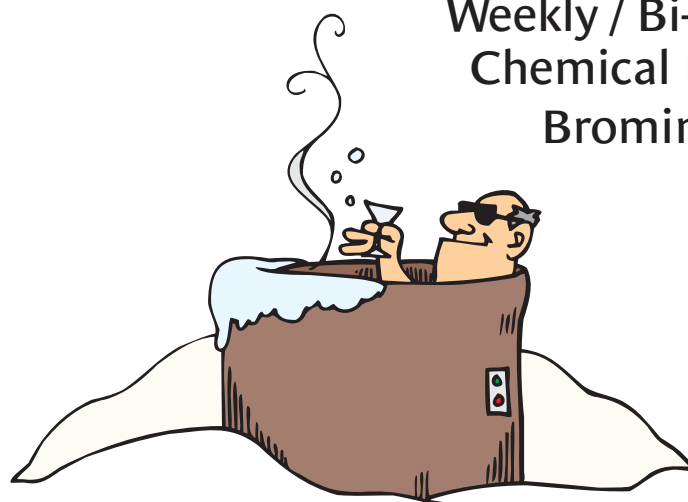
A further \$2,500 was presented to the Haliburton Lake Cottage Association to help cover costs associated with maintaining beaches in Dysart – most notably at Head Lake Park. \$1,500 will go towards funding a project designed to deter geese from gathering at the downtown site, with a further \$1,000 to support the hiring of a summer student to help out with other maintenance.

The Haliburton Curling Club will receive \$5,000 to help pay for eavestroughing work at their Mountain Street facility.

Elsewhere, the Haliburton Sculpture Forest received \$12,500 - \$7,500 in cash and \$5,000 in in-kind work, to help cover escalating costs at the site. For more on the Haliburton Sculpture Forest, check out page 11.

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Forever in our memories: Creighton Feir

English is a funny ol' thing

I READ, OFTEN, that English is by far the single most difficult language an individual can try to learn.

It's a strange concept for most of us anglophones to wrap our heads around. After all, we've been speaking English for most of our lives. We picked it up when we were babies, and were fluent before we hit double digits. How hard can it be?

This particular topic of conversation came up recently during an online chat with a group of my friends. In what was a brief foray away from the typical topics – football [okay, soccer], football [again, soccer] and... Okay, fine... Soccer – we started discussing how hard it would be attempting to learn a second language. You see, one of my friends has been presented with a job opportunity that would require him to move from England to France. Before he commits one way or the other, he wants to try to learn how to speak French.

A reasonable decision, I thought. Immediately though, several of our other friends started to laugh. I guess the concept of learning a new language, or more specifically this certain friend attempting to learn a new language, was funny to them. I listened as a couple of them claimed there's no harder language in the world to learn than French.

This is where I sprang into action, equipped with the knowledge that it is in fact English that is the most difficult to pick up. I know this because Google told me

so.

"Nah, get out of it. What are you on about? You're off your rocker you are, Mike," one exclaimed.

Now I'm not sure why I chose this particular hill to die on, but I doubled down. I started referencing the usual linguistic mysteries that I'm sure some of you have heard of. My favourite was looking at two states south of the border – Kansas and Arkansas. Why is it that Kansas is pronounced exactly how it sounds, yet Arkansas is pronounced 'Are-can-saw'?

There was silence.

Then I found this doozie online.

If the 'gh' sound in 'enough' is pronounced 'F' and the 'O' in 'women' makes the short 'I' sound, and the 'T' in 'nation' is pronounced 'sh', then shouldn't the word 'ghoti' be pronounced just like 'fish'?

Furthermore, using the same method and reinforcing the original point, ghoti could

also be seen to be a completely silent word. Taking the 'gh' from 'though', the 'O' from 'people', the 'T' from 'ballet' and the 'I' from 'business' and there you have it – nothing at all.

Now, you may be thinking to yourself 'what on earth are you talking about?' or 'what's the point of all of this?' I guess that, it itself, is the point. English is such a complicated language that by trying to break down and explain exactly why it is complicated, I've complicated matters to such a point that my point now seems pointless.

English sure is a funny ol' thing.



mike
baker

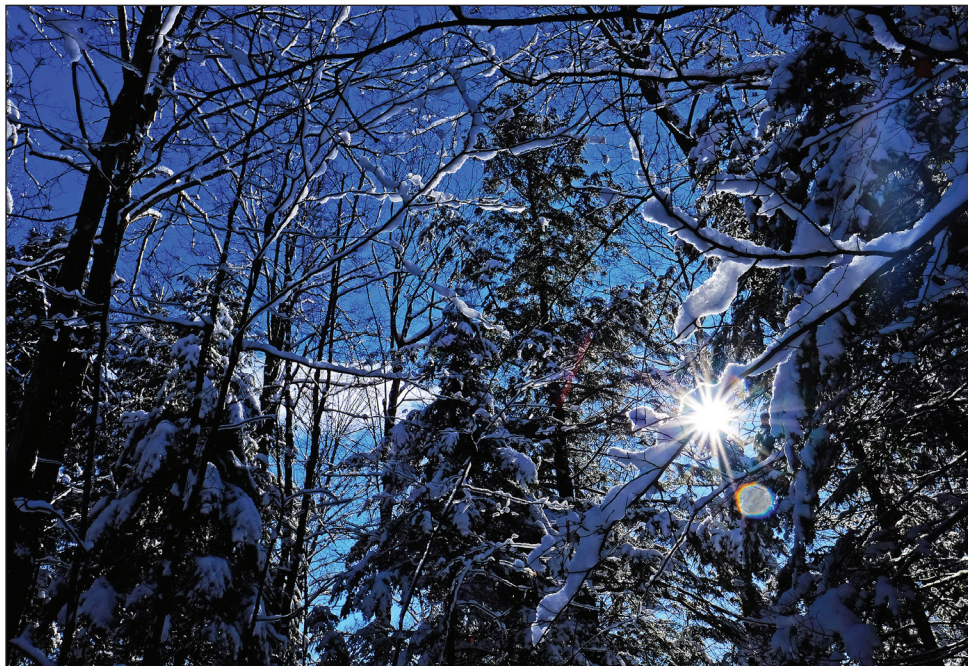
Editorial

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Winter sky

by Darren Lum

Out and about

THE SNOW was coming at him sideways, a curtain of white folding around his pickup as he made his way into town. He eased up on the gas and turned off the distracting radio. After a month of mild weather, winter had returned. To be honest, Jim kind of liked it. He liked the fresh snow outlining the trees against a dark green background. He liked being able to see the variety of animal tracks on his front yard, reminding him he was just a visitor where other creatures had been living for a very long time. And he liked knowing it would soon be safe to fly across the lake on his snowmobile.

Ice fishers had already been out on the lake for a week or so and the thought of it sent shivers up Jim's spine. Too soon, he whispered under his breath as he drove by. But his thoughts soon switched to his task for today. First he would hit the lumber store, then the hardware. His needs were simple but he was starting from scratch.

Over the weekend he had been invited by his neighbour Monika for yet another coffee and snack. Her lemon cake was to die for but Jim hated that he was her guest more than the other way around.

So since he wasn't much of a baker, he thought he could make her a bird house to show his appreciation. And not just any kind of bird house. He drew up some plans for what was going to be more like a bird hotel. If it turned out the way he hoped, it would be pretty impressive.

Mitch was on the counter at the first store when Jim walked in. A lot of guys didn't particularly like Mitch but Jim didn't have a problem with him. Yes, he was a bit taciturn but then Jim wasn't interested in a lot of chitchat anyway. Just get what you need and get out, was his motto.

The hardware store was different. Jim always seemed to run into people he knew and when that happened, it was delay after delay. He had to be polite since these folks were usually his cus-

tomers. Snow ploughing, deck building, clearing brush; these were all in Jim's repertoire. So he had to stop, discuss the weather and smile a lot when he saw them. Or rather when they saw him. Sometimes he tried to pretend he didn't notice them but invariably he'd hear his name called out across the plumbing aisle and would have to respond.

They were good people, he knew, but he had never felt comfortable making small talk. In fact, Jim wasn't comfortable around people generally. Sometimes he wondered if there was something wrong with him. He'd always been this way. It was like he was somehow being judged by others and would come up

short. So he'd do the work and smile and hope they didn't come around and watch him or strike up a conversation.

It was different with Monika. Even the lulls in conversation never felt awkward, uncomfortable. She didn't seem to mind when he ran out of words or turned down an invite for coffee.

Fortunately the store had what he wanted and before too long, he was on his way home. He'd also picked up a small can of paint for the bird hotel. It was going to be

quite the edifice when completed, he thought with a smile.

The snow had eased up so he turned the radio back on. A rousing version of a Leonard Cohen song got him tapping on his steering wheel and humming along. Glancing to his right he saw one of the ice fishers standing by his hut having a smoke. Just clean up after yourself, Jim thought. He hated to see the garbage some people left on the ice, all of it ending up in the lake come spring.

Pulling into his driveway Jim marveled at how quickly the morning's snow had accumulated. There'd be phone messages, people wanting their driveways ploughed. He'd want to get those done quickly so he could start on the bird hotel. He wanted to make it really special.

Down



sharon
lynch

Our road

points of view

Date night revisited

I'M NOT sure when I lost my sense of time during this pandemic, but I'm guessing it happened sometime between the second and third decade of this lockdown. All I know for certain is that I no longer mark the days by the Gregorian calendar so much as by a complicated formula that takes into account the number of times I walk my dogs divided by the number days I have gotten away without laundering my track pants. By that count, I reckon this is the fifth Tuesday in the year 2038.

Of course, I could be wrong.

What I am definitely not wrong about is that this pandemic and lockdown is making things difficult around here. Don't believe me. Well, Jenn and I had the following conversation yesterday morning.

"Hey cutie," I said affectionately, as we met at the coffee maker.

"Hey gorgeous," she replied.

Then, after an awkward pause, it became clear each of us was addressing our dog.

"I think its time to add a bit of excitement into our relationship," I said, shortly thereafter.

"Is this another way of saying you want us to subscribe to the Outdoors Channel?" she replied.

"You have another idea?" I countered.

Sadly, she did.

Clear as a bell, she said, "It's time for a date night."

If there has ever been another phrase that strikes more terror into a grown man's heart, I can't think of it. For when a partner says this, they might as well have



steve
galea

Loon Tales

declared "Dazzle me."

Or, even worse, "You're going to need to wear something other than those track pants," which is problematic since I do not have a second pair.

Sure, it sounds harmless. But that's only until you remember that a date night will ultimately be judged by the level of planning, thoughtfulness and consideration you put into it.

It's unwinnable.

I won't get into gory details. I've written about date nights before. But I will say the pandemic has made it that much harder.

For one thing, going to the grocery store to buy a package of dates has never been more inconvenient – and the decision on whether to buy a large pack or a small pack was never an easy one to begin with. The only good part is that at least you now get to wear a mask while doing it, which means, if one of your buddies catches you in the act of planning a date night, at least you'll have plausible deniability.

I know what you are thinking. Why buy dates at all? Why can't other snacks suffice?

Well, because a wise man knows that when a woman says "date night" it is not open to interpretation. I mean she literally told you she wants to snack on dates that evening. Oh sure, you can bring home figs or even prunes and she'll probably appreciate the gesture – that's how women are.

But she will also remember how you did not go the extra mile to bring home a nice package of dates – which, again, is exactly what she asked for – and she will soon resent it. That resentment will eventually manifest itself in all sorts of ways you really don't want to know about – a strong resistance to getting the Outdoors Channel immediately comes to mind.

But, hey, it's a free country. Do what you like.

Go ahead. Try to win her heart with unsalted almonds.

But, honestly, unsalted almonds? That's just plain nuts.



pic of the past

Anne McKay of Haliburton shared this photo of the Carnarvon school children of 1952. This photo originally ran December 2010.

letters to the editor

Vaccine rollout: The sad truth

To the Editor,

As a long-term care physician I anticipated that rolling out vaccines to Ontarians would be slow. Why would I think this? It's simple. We live in an environment where simple tasks are subject to overbearing oversight. I knew that every 'i' would be dotted and every 't' crossed before we proceeded with vaccination. I knew that a complex data collection system capable of endless analysis would be required before we could press 'go.' The shiny University Health Network vaccination 'playbook' embodies what I have described.

This has cost lives.

We are now more than a month passed the much celebrated 'V day'. The promise to vaccinate the vulnerable in LTC and the hard working staff bearing the burden of keeping them safe has proven elusive. We are a rich province with resources envied worldwide and yet we have not achieved that simple goal.

"The Canoe" nails it... again!

To the Editor,

Last Wednesday, the 20th of January, was Inauguration Day for Joe Biden, who was sworn in as the 46th president of the United States of America at noon on that day.

I couldn't watch it on TV as I was seeing patients, and at 12:10 P.M. I sat at my office's front desk to update the morning's charts. Just then, a kind-sounding gentleman's voice coming from Canoe 100.9 F.M., the radio station that's always playing in my waiting room, said this:

Well folks, we have a new President.

Premier Ford, how dare you blame Pfizer? We HAD enough vaccine doses to complete vaccination for all LTC Residents in this province. As of January 23, 2021 your website boasts that 276,146 doses of vaccine have been administered. There were 78,000 LTC Residents in Ontario before the pandemic. How many doses of this vaccine ended up in the arms of privileged Hospital CEO's or any non frontline healthcare staff displays disgraceful mismanagement of the supply to date. How some recipients have felt entitled to those precious doses questions my faith in humanity.

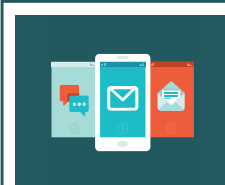
We have 134 LTC residents in Haliburton County. Of the 276,146 doses administered to date in the province our rural population of 134 has received zero doses. That is a number, vulnerability and sad truth we all understand.

Tina Stephenson MD

My immediate reaction was, "WE have a new President!? Americans have a new President, not us! But then it hit me: That guy's right. The entire planet has breathed an enormous collective sigh of relief with the inauguration of Joe Biden and we do, all of us, indeed have a new President."

God bless America ... and the guy on Canoe F.M.

René Benoit
Haliburton, ON



Have a thought, comment or opinion you'd like to share?

Send a letter to the editor to
mike@haliburtonpress.com

Local Long-Term Care Coalition hopes to inspire change in 'broken' industry

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

After issuing a proverbial call to arms last May, a new community group committed to improving conditions within the region's long-term care homes is continuing to share their concerns that many senior residents living within those facilities are not being treated with respect and dignity.

Local residents Bonnie Roe and Mike Perry launched the Long-Term Care Coalition after hearing horror stories from friends and family who have loved ones presently living in nursing homes and retirement facilities. Together, the pair rallied a small group of community activists, who have spent the past eight months lobbying for drastic systemic change to the long-term care system.

Speaking to the *Echo* recently, the pair pointed towards the devastating COVID-19 outbreak at nearby Pinecrest Nursing Home in Bobcaygeon last March and the disastrous roof leak and subsequent months-long evacuation of Highland Wood in Haliburton as big indicators that change is not only needed, but long overdue.

"We're very concerned that our seniors are not being treated with respect and dignity," Roe said. "When you look at the resources that are going in to support our seniors, it's not enough. And that's really our crucial issue – that these people are not getting the amount of care that they need."

As a registered nurse in her professional life, this is an issue that is particu-



The disastrous roof leak and subsequent months-long evacuation of Highland Wood in Haliburton was one of the underlying reasons Bonnie Roe and Mike Perry came together to form the Long-Term Care Coalition. /File photo

larly close to Roe's heart.

"This is an important issue to me. I have spent time, at one point in my career, working in a long-term care facility, so when I see seniors being isolated, when I see the government not providing the care, or the necessary funds to these

long-term care institutions, it just breaks my heart," Roe said. "I do not think that seniors, in their final days, deserve to be placed in a home, and then be ignored and disrespected."

The coalition has established a list of five core priorities it intends to chip away at over the coming months. Right at the top of the list is advocating for the inclusion of long-term care to the Canada Health Act, a move that Perry says will completely change the way the sector operates.

"We need to fix the system. When you think about it, long-term care is considered to be a part of general healthcare. So, really, it should be under the Canada Health Act. Doing that does two things – it makes funding exclusively public, and it also provides national standards. Enforceable national standards," Perry said.

"Tommy Douglas [considered the father of universal health coverage in Canada] always said that Medicare as we know it, it was always phase one. Then there would have to be other phases implemented to make sure we have a more holistic system," Perry added. "What we've seen now, given the ongoing pandemic, is a spotlight highlighting some of the shortcomings of long-term care. And many of these issues have been long-standing."

Back in May, after sending soldiers into many of Ontario's long-term care homes to help deal with the mass outbreaks of COVID-19, the Canadian Armed Forces released a damning 15-page report shining a light on the horrible conditions its members witnessed at five nursing homes in the GTA.

Brigadier General C.J.J. Mialkowski noted that military members identified a number of medical, professional and technical issues present at the sites, mainly in the standards and quality of medical care provided to residents.

In the immediate aftermath of the report being made public, Merrilee Fullerton, Ontario's minister of long-term care, said the provincial system had been "ignored" and "neglected" for decades. Premier Doug Ford called the whole system "broken" and promised that much-needed changes would be imminent.

The best way to implement real change, Perry believes, is to take away the money-making aspect of the business.

"We need to get profit motives out of long-term care. I have no idea why we ever conceptualized caring for our elderly as a profit making venture in the first place," Perry said. "The pandemic is really encouraging us to rethink and reimagine things, and I think this would be a good place to start."

Roe brings up the Butterfly Model of Care, first conceptualized in Europe and today being used in long-term care systems across the globe, predominantly with individuals living with dementia, as a positive example of putting the needs of residents first. The model focuses on delivering emotion-focused care that connects with people in a dignified, human way. It addresses the holistic needs of individuals and supports good quality of life for residents.

To help change the culture of long-term care to being more resident-centred and rights based, Roe believes the industry needs to implement several recommendations made by the Registered Nursing Association of Ontario to increase staffing at all facilities. A key cog of this recommendation calls for every resident to receive at least four hours of direct care every day, while it also states facility administrators should look to improve workloads, working conditions and conditions for care. The report also calls for increased infection prevention and control.

Roe believes the reinstatement of annual resident quality inspections of all long-term care homes, with consistency in enforcement when inspections yield rule violations in homes, could go a long way towards fixing some of the issues presently plaguing the industry.

While changes are necessary, Perry wants to make it clear that he believes the problems that persist today are a result of a broken system rather than anything to do with the staff who work inside the homes.

"We support and are very grateful for our frontline workers. To us, this is an issue of the problems within the system and structure that have existed for some time. COVID-19 just brought them to the fore," Perry said. "We know that staff are working hard and are getting burnt out and need more resources, and pay, and training. Those are all things that we've built into our goals as well."

The LTC Coalition presently boasts around seven core members, with a further 40 to 50 offering varying levels of support, Roe said. The group is hosting a virtual town hall meeting this Friday [Jan. 29] at 7:30 p.m. for the purpose of, hopefully, finding more members and soliciting local residents' ideas and opinions on how to fix Ontario's long-term care sector.

The group is also participating in an ongoing radio campaign, running until Feb. 5 on CanoeFM here in Haliburton and BobFM, based in Lindsay. The purpose of that initiative, Roe says, is "just to bring more awareness to our group."

Perry, in particular, is excited for the upcoming town hall.

"We're going to use that to really listen to those who participate, and use that information to decide our future action. We know there are lots of good ideas and suggestions out there right now, but we're really trying to focus and make sure that we're effective on a short list of the main changes we feel are in need to the system," Perry said.

For more information on the group, and to find out how to tune into the upcoming town hall, visit ltnneedsyou.ca.

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Children of Maple View Complex play on the recently installed playground outside their homes on Thursday, Jan. 21 in Wilberforce. The complex recently had the playground installed to replace a 25-year-old playground with a \$34,000 Ontario Trillium Foundation grant. /DARREN LUM Staff

Giving children a place to play

DARREN LUM

Staff Reporter

Watching her seven-year-old son Andrew McArthur-Robertson clamber on and around the latest addition to the Maple View complex in Wilberforce makes Sandra McArthur smile.

It's a long-time coming for her and the residents that call the complex home. The community was presented with a Ontario Trillium Foundation grant worth \$34,000 in 2019 to cover the costs of the new playground installed a late-last year to replace a 25-year-old playground.

McArthur said it provides her peace of mind to know her son has a safe place to play close to home.

"This playground equipment offers more opportunity for imagination. The other was just so straight forward. And it wasn't multi-age groups. This one has multi-age groups because you have the smaller slide and the bigger slide, so more than one age group can be on it," she said. "Being able to cook your meals and watch your kid at the same time is convenient. And the kids really enjoy it."

A resident at the complex for 11 years, who is originally from Toronto said she's happy living in Wilberforce where it isn't too far for her son to be able to attend Stuart Baker Elementary School where he can be enrolled in French Immersion. When she lived in Cardiff the distance was too great for the bus trip to transport her two older children to continue their French immersion study after starting in Lindsay.

Kathy Rogers, the administrator for the Monmouth Township Non-Profit Housing Corporation, said this grant provides a positive message to the residents of the complex.

"I hope it makes them feel important because I think it's important it's here. Right now, I think the importance is being highlighted with the pandemic because technically we're not supposed to have our playground open according to our service manager," she said. "But for us we have it opened because we have a limited number of kids."

She estimates there are close to 10 children that live on the property run by the corporation, which includes 24 apartments and 10 townhouses.

The footprint for the playground limited the options for what could be installed, but the corporation was conscious of certain features that would benefit the young users.

"It's not a big space so there is not a lot you can do with it. So we wanted to make sure we didn't lose the things that we knew the kids played with and see if there was anything we can add," she said.

They added a slide and ensured it had raised platforms, which allows the children to play "forts" underneath the structure sometimes, using snow from the ground to create walls at the openings, Rogers added.

Originally, the Monmouth Township Non-Profit Housing Corporation wanted to replace the degrading rubber matting, but realized with a successful application for OTF funding they could replace everything. The aging equipment had been enduring regular repairs and was not open for use during these times, forcing the youth of the complex to go to town to play at the town playground.

The installation also permitted a feature with the "wooden border so that one area is blended into the grass to allow a smoother transition for strollers, walkers and wheelchairs."

Without the grant, the corporation was considering other materials such as sand, gravel and cedar chips.

"It was tremendous that they were able to give us that funding because then we could put in that rubber matting. It's better for maintenance and great for the kids to be on. It's nice and bouncy. It works so well," she said.

Rogers points out this playground is not open to the public at this time with the lockdown measures.

It is open to the youth that live at the complex, as it was decided by the corporation's board, who believe there is not a high density of children living at the complex. When it comes to safety for the residents the decision to open the playground made sense.

"For me these kids can play in their own playground with their own neighbours and feel safer instead of going up to town to the playground area where everybody uses it and you have no idea who's there. Less worry about being exposed to germs, right?"

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Dr. Gemmill speaks to media, Board of Health in COVID-19 updates

SUE TIFFIN

Staff Reporter

The following are brief reports of items discussed during a media press conference held by the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District health unit on Jan. 20, and the health unit's Board of Health meeting held Jan. 21.

Confirmed case summary

Dr. Ian Gemmill, acting medical officer of health for the HKPR health unit, said last Wednesday that in the past 14 days, just fewer than 150 cases had been reported locally, with about 10 to 15 cases reported each day, and fewer than that on some days.

Gemmill attributed lower cases last week to the effects of the provincial lockdown, which began Dec. 26, and said further effects will be seen from the stay-at-home order as well.

"All these things mean that our cases at least for the last couple of days have been diminishing," said Gemmill. "I hope that that trend continues, and I thank people for doing the things that need to be in place to make that happen."

The source of transmission is important to look at, said Gemmill, and 30 per cent of cases can be attributed to household contact, which is difficult to avoid.

More worrisome to Gemmill is the 30 per cent of cases attributed to close contact, possibly from work or transportation but also from social gatherings, and the 20 per cent of cases that can not be traced back to a source, meaning there is community transmission.

"We had quite a bit of an upswing after the Christmas holidays, that's continued until just recently, and now we're beginning to see the start of the effect of the restrictions in place since that time."

Nine outbreaks are being dealt with by the local health unit, eight at long-term care or retirement homes throughout City of Kawartha Lakes and Northumberland County, and one at the Canadian Centre for Addictions in Northumberland County.

The greatest case numbers are currently within the 50 to 59 year age group, and then the 20 to 29 year age group.

"There's very little documented illness in children," said Gemmill. "It's not yet completely clear if that's because they are less susceptible to coronavirus, or whether they don't have symptoms and therefore we don't recognize them as cases and therefore don't have the testing but before the school break at Christmas, I

can tell you, we did have cases in schools but almost all of them were situations in which we could determine that the transmission took place not in schools but outside of schools and that there was very little transmission within the school setting so it's mostly kids who have been exposed to others outside of the school setting."

Vaccine planning

"We've got a plan," said Dr. Gemmill in the press conference last week.

Gemmill reiterated his message that the health unit is "ready to go when the vaccine arrives" during the Board of Health meeting on Jan. 21.

"The vaccine program, as you know, has run into a number of snags, not only nationally but provincially," Gemmill said at the Board of Health meeting on Jan. 21, noting that without a supply of the vaccine, the health unit cannot immunize area residents.

The health unit has been working with long-term care homes to prepare to immunize residents, staff and essential caregivers as the first priority. Gemmill said it is possible the health unit will not have enough vaccines for the first doses of those priority cases, and so further priorities will need to be set.

"The priorities will clearly have to do with what is the incidence in the area where the long-term care home is situated, i.e. what is the risk from the outside, and number two, are they in outbreak and can we use the vaccine to protect the wings or the units of the long-term care home that are not in outbreak so we can provide some upfront protection for those residents that may be at increased risk because there's an outbreak in another part of the home."

In March, when Gemmill said the vaccine is expected to be plentiful, the general population can be vaccinated beginning with other essential workers and older adults including seniors living in their community in their own places of residence.

"We're ready to go when the vaccine arrives," he said, reiterating that the lockdown and stay-at-home order keep the numbers down in the short-term so more people can be immunized rather than infected.

Dysart et al Mayor Andrea Roberts, who sits on the Board of Health, spoke to Haliburton County's high senior population and asked how the board might advocate for a group she felt was being missed – those seniors who live at home without outside care but rely on family and friends

for assistance.

"How can we advocate for those vulnerable population to be included in Phase 1?" she asked. "I see that they're missing there."

Gemmill said there is a descending list of people considered most vulnerable based on where complications, hospitalizations and deaths have occurred due to COVID-19.

"The people who are elderly, doing very well in their own homes, are right behind the long-term care homes and high-risk retirement homes, the healthcare workers who are front-line and the home care people," he said. "The home care people are higher, just because with their chronic medical conditions, they're high-risk. The elderly people that you're speaking of are right next on the list. To say, to advocate for them to be in Phase 1 ... they are next on the list and they will be our number one priority when we start the community-based immunization programs."

Advocacy from a number of public health units has taken place on ministry calls to include this demographic in vaccination plans as soon as possible.

Children, under the age of 18, were not included in the clinical trials for vaccines, and neither vaccine being administered in Canada is available for children.

Cottage country cases

Roberts also made note of a situation unique to areas with numerous seasonal residents, including Haliburton County.

"One thing that's very controversial in our area, maybe not in other parts of the [health unit region] is that Haliburton is cottage country and so we have a number of people in the stay-at-home order who have chosen to make their cottage their second home and are here," said Roberts. "There's quite a grumble that the numbers aren't representative of positive cases of people who are actually here in the county because of course we know that the reporting goes to their principal residence. So how can we combat that or assuage the people to know that the numbers aren't skyrocketing through the roof, that there's hundreds of cases in Haliburton County?"

Gemmill said currently under the restrictions issued by the province, though a stay-at-home order is in place, he had not seen that it's not allowed to stay at a recreational property during this time.

"You're right, if somebody came, stayed at their cottage, got tested and turned out to be positive ... if they're doing it right, their contact should not be in [the area]. Maybe they got groceries but they shouldn't be doing anything else, it is a stay-at-home order. If they're working, they can't work from their cottage if they work in Toronto, they must be working remotely, so they've got to stay at home."

He noted that gathering and travelling, even throughout the province, is what is causing the disease to spread.

"I can't stop you from going to your cottage in Haliburton, but I can reinforce and plead with you to stay in your home, if that's what you're doing and to - if you have to go out for example for essential things like getting groceries - do it in the safest possible way, and please, please, please, don't put anybody else in the area at risk," he said.

He noted he will bring the topic to the next press conference held by the health unit, but reiterated that if people are choosing to travel from one home to another, they should "do it once, and stay at home."

"If you are somebody that is staying in your recreational home, there are certain guidelines that you have to follow to keep the people of Haliburton County as safe as possible from infection," he said.

Stay-at-home snowmobiling

When asked if the health unit would put further restrictions on snowmobiling and close trails, Gemmill said the answer had already been put in place by the provincial stay-at-home order.

"First of all, we have a stay-at-home area in our province," said Gemmill. "It's not just on the trails, it's all over the province. The stay-at-home order means we go out for groceries, we go out to medical appointments, we go out to work."

Currently, snowmobilers are not to travel to places outside their own region, and are to only use designated and available snowmobiling trails in their area. It is recommended they only snowmobile with members of their own immediate family and household, and stay at least two metres apart from others. The current limit on outdoor gatherings remains only five people.

If people are not obeying stay-at-home orders, Gemmill said that's a matter of concern for those in enforcement.

"I would say it's important for people to get out to get exercise, and I suppose to have a little fun as well," said Gemmill, though he later noted: "I'm thinking that walking is probably more exercise than snowmobiling."

He said he was pleading with people to respect the stay-at-home orders, and avoid travelling and gathering, to protect hospitals and keep people unaffected until immunization.

"I have no problem with people going out for recreation and for exercise, but do keep within the spirit of the regulations so we don't have transmissions," he said, stressing that social gatherings have been responsible for outbreaks and amplification of the virus.

Message for anti-maskers

In response to anti-mask protests happening in the region, Dr. Gemmill said gatherings without masks and while spreading anti-mask messaging or frustration with public health restrictions to curb the virus was not helping.

"The enemy out there is not each other," he said. "The enemy is a virus, and we're in a situation that is unprecedented."

Gemmill said that he recognizes the word 'unprecedented' is often used, but that it accurately describes this time of pandemic.

"In my lifetime, I've never lived through such a bizarre time where socially I'm restricted, if I'm seeing friends it's on the computer, I don't see my grandchildren the way I would before, and I'm wearing a mask every time I go out to get groceries, and that's because not only is it the right thing to do to protect myself, but it also is the right thing to do to protect others in case I might have the infection and to show that we all are united on this, to go forward that we all try to stop this virus. That's the goal here."

Gemmill said the restrictions in place are to help protect the hospital system, vulnerable people, and protect others until the vaccine can offer further protection.

"I just don't think that fighting at this point in time with each other is useful," he said, noting that he recognizes the restrictions are not fun, but also that they will not be in place forever.

"My parents lived through the war and Depression," he said. "These were not fun times to get through but they got through them together."

He said there is no question the spread of the virus is amplified or restricted based on our own behaviours.

First time visitor wins

Haliburton resident Kim Stamp submitted this photo of an owl perched on a metal pole in her backyard last week. She said this was the first time she had ever seen an owl this close to her property. The little guy sat beside the bird feeder for a while, waiting patiently for a mouse or a mole to emerge. Kim says the pair engaged in a lengthy staring contest, which, of course, the owl won. / Submitted photo



Dysart provides dollars, in-kind support to Haliburton Sculpture Forest

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

When Barb Bolin joined the volunteer committee of the Haliburton Sculpture Forest more than two decades ago, she would never have imagined the site would eventually become one of Ontario's top tourist destinations.

Beginning in earnest as a small community initiative in 2000, the vision for the Haliburton Sculpture Forest was clear – to bring more attention to the arts and create an easily accessible and inviting way for people to experience nature in our community. Starting out with three sculptures, installed within the forest inside Glebe Park, the site now boasts 37 hand-crafted sculptures and six “one-of-a-kind” benches created by professional artists from across the world.

“Our goal was to bring together art, nature and recreation,” Bolin told Dysart et al council back in December.

The inspiration for the site lies across the Atlantic – Grizedale Forest, a large national park tucked deep within England's Lake District. The site is home to more than 100 sculptures and attracts over 150,000 visitors per year.

Over the past 20 years, the committee charged with the operation of the Haliburton Sculpture Forest has raised and invested north of \$350,000 in an attempt to establish a similar phenomenon on this side of the pond. Those years of hard work appeared to pay off last year, as more people than ever before travelled up to Haliburton to check the forest out.

“This past summer and fall, people were motivated to find unique outdoor and cultural activities they could experience safely. That resulted in an explosion of social media attention, with people posting their experiences from the Haliburton Sculpture Forest,” Bolin said. “This resulted in, over a four month period, double the number of visitors, from 9,000 in 2019 to 18,000 this past summer.”

She added, “We estimate, for the whole year, we have had around 30,000 visitors.”

While the site garnered the attention of people on social media, it was also highlighted on several websites and blogs. The forest ranked fourth out of 20 sculpture gardens profiled by ToDoCanada.ca, and was the only site in Haliburton County included in the recently published book *Unforgettable Ontario: 100 Destinations*, written by Canadian author Noel Hudson. The forest was also ranked, by TripAdvisor, as the second best attraction in Haliburton, behind only the Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Reserve.

Ontario's Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries Lisa MacLeod noted the forest was “a perfect mix of nature and heritage” and that it



Ontario Tourism minister Lisa MacLeod looks at the sculpture A Walk in the Woods made by sculptor Mary Ellen Farrow with Dysart Township mayor Andrea Roberts and MPP for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock Laurie Scott look behind at Sculpture Forest on Thursday, July 9 in Haliburton. MacLeod was impressed by the attraction and also visited Minden's Whitewater Preserve, as part of a provincial tour to encourage provincial residents to explore their communities close to and away from home. /FILE photo

“has an abundance of beauty and meaning” while visiting Haliburton this past summer.

“One of the unique attractions of the sculpture forest is that it captures the interest of kids and adults alike, and has something for people from all walks of life and cultures,” Bolin said. “If you go for a walk in the summer, you can hear the forest being enjoyed in multiple languages. Because access is free, and pathways are fairly smooth and wide, it's accessible both financially and physi-

cally.”

The increased popularity, however, is starting to take a toll. Some areas of the forest are requiring regular maintenance, due to the number of people walking the trails, and it's becoming difficult for the volunteer group to keep up.

“We have kept operational costs as low as possible, but we have realized this year the Haliburton Sculpture Forest has reached a tipping point. The dramatic increase in the number of visitors is causing wear and tear on pathways, and

is impacting soil around the sculptures,” Bolin said. “The amount of litter has increased, and the number of guide maps needed has doubled.”

She continued, “Moving forward, we need to make greater investment to maintain the site to ensure a good visitor experience.”

Bolin said a new group, entitled Friends of the Haliburton Sculpture Forest, was being set up to promote the need for more community engagement and assistance in maintaining the park. Long-time committee members are also working alongside several other Glebe Park partners to establish what Bolin described as an endowment fund, which could over time turn into an annual source of funds to help offset the cost of running the forest.

Those costs will increase to \$32,000 in 2021, Bolin expects. She asked Dysart et al council if they would consider making an annual contribution of \$12,500 to the sculpture forest operation.

“Approximately 90 per cent of our funding is spent locally, and these funds go directly back into the local community,” Bolin said. “Over the past few years, Dysart has made significant investments into the downtown skate park, the arena, Head Lake Park, boat launches... We're asking for a small annual investment from the municipality to maintain the forest as a cultural and tourism attraction.”

Ward 4 Coun. John Smith wondered if the township could provide some form of in-kind work on an ongoing basis to lower the dollar amount requested. He suggested municipal staff could help with landscaping and general maintenance, something Jim Blake, another member of the sculpture forest committee, indicated would be helpful.

Smith went on to suggest that the local sculpture forest committee should consider charging visitors both an entry fee and a parking fee, bringing up statistics from Grizedale Forest in England to drive home his point.

“At Grizedale, they charge 8 pounds per day for people to park – that works out to around \$15. They also sell annual memberships for around \$75. There are some creative approaches that others use to draw more pocket change,” Smith stated.

Bolin said the Haliburton Sculpture Forest has always been free to those interested in walking its trails, and that she would hate to ever see that change.

At a budget meeting earlier this month, council decided to approve \$5,000 in in-kind work for the sculpture forest, to be carried out by township staff, while also writing a cheque for \$7,500 to cover other costs. There was a consensus that this would be a one-time funding for now, and that council would converse with the forest committee ahead of next year's budget to see how they're doing financially.

New cyber security initiative launched in Haliburton County

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Haliburton County Development Corporation is partnering up with its sister organization in the Kawartha Lakes to provide “critical” cyber security and support services to small and medium sized businesses across the region.

The two organizations are teaming up with E-Tech, a Canadian firm that specializes in providing full-service consulting on all things IT. The company was named the Best Managed IT Solutions Provider at the 2019 Cana-

dian Business Awards.

According to a press release distributed by the Haliburton CDC, the services provided by E-Tech are designed specifically to help clients succeed in the online world of business, helping to avoid potentially disastrous security breaches.

“The Haliburton County Development Corporation seeks to support businesses in Haliburton County during these challenging times,” says Patti Tallman, executive director of HCDC. “As we see many businesses have pivoted their services by providing alternative ways to generate income, having implemented or expanded their online presence. This brings on a new meaning to ‘open for business’ in the cyber highway's back end, so to speak, and can be devastating.”

She added, “This innovative program is essential to take the necessary steps to ensure the safety and security of your business.”

The program is open to small and medium sized businesses within Kawartha Lakes and Haliburton County at no cost.

Businesses that enrol will be provided with a network security assessment, which can identify and detect a wide-range of internal cyber security threats. Also included is cyber security awareness training, which features a one-hour webinar on today's cyber security threats, including phishing and ransomware awareness, and safe web browsing.

For more information, contact Patti Tallman at ptallman@haliburtoncdc.ca, or call 705-457-3555.

Lakefront Property Owners,

The Haliburton County Home Builders Association has spent the last few weeks bringing forward a few facts regarding the proposed Shoreline By-law that the County of Haliburton is attempting to implement. The goal of our media campaign is to bring awareness of the By-law to the waterfront property owners in the County.

The HCHBA is urging you to contact your municipal elected officials, Lake Association Executive as well as your M.P. and M.P.P. to voice your concerns and to ask questions. We also encourage you to visit the HCHBA website (www.hchba.ca/resources) where we have posted information relating to the proposed Shoreline Preservation By-law. We ask you to speak to your neighbours about their thoughts and we encourage you to write our local newspapers with your concerns.

Report - December 21, 2020.

Haliburton County is home to hundreds of beautiful lakes, and through each passing season, these waters are the heart and soul of the residents who live here. In recent months there have been concerns raised about the presence of algae in these lakes we so deeply love and enjoy. With environmental care informing each meeting, the Haliburton County Home Builders' Association wants to learn more about the relationship between human habitation and algae growth. Under the guidance of the HCHBA, a study was commissioned procuring a scientific report of algal blooms in Haliburton County. With this report, the HCHBA aims to reinforce the importance of proper scientific research when exploring new bylaws and policies which will affect the development of our communities.

The HCHBA has engaged a Doctor of Biological Sciences and Micro Biology. She is currently working on bio stimulants to decrease the use and environmental impact of conventional fertilizer as well as seaweed cultivation as a strategy to reduce diffuse nutrient runoffs.

Algal Blooms in Haliburton County

Blue-Green Algae: Cyanobacteria Facts and Fixes

Blue-green algae, or more specifically, Cyanobacteria date back 3.5 billion years¹. They photosynthesize like plants and produce oxygen. In fact, they are responsible for producing around 30% of all oxygen on earth². There are over 2000 different types of blue-green algae and you will recognize some of the beneficial applications that are being developed using them³. For example, natural colourants in cosmetics, natural sunscreens, protein and vitamin supplements, as well as biofuels³. You may have even consumed some blue-green algae or Spirulina in your morning smoothie⁴.

Cyanobacterial blooms: A multitude of causes

Lately, cyanobacteria have gotten a bad reputation for their role in lake water quality – especially for their potential to form harmful algal blooms and toxins. However, despite their long-lasting history and benefit to earth, the phenomenon of harmful blooms is still not well understood by scientists^{3,5}.

Here's what we do know. Triggers of algal blooms include³:

- 1) Stagnant water
- 2) High water temperatures – above 25°C
- 3) Nutrient availability, especially the ratio of nitrogen and phosphorus in water
- 4) High levels of dissolved carbon dioxide in water
- 5) Long sunlight hours
- 6) Sedimentation of other microscopic organisms
- 7) Light winds

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If you have any questions, we at the HCHBA recommend that you write, email, or call your municipal elected officials with your comments or concerns. The Draft Bylaw and Questions and Answers can be found on our website under 'Resources' at www.hchba.ca

#Building with the Environment in Mind

Cyanobacteria blooms: What is the solution for Haliburton County?

But what can we do about it? Control of algal blooms is both difficult and controversial. It is safe to say there is no silver bullet and no one-size-fits-all approach. A recent study found that one of the most important factors in successfully mitigating algal bloom is relying on local knowledge⁶. Do we have leaky or aging septic systems? Are we nutrient loading our waters through intensive farming? Do we have storm runoff entering our lakes? Is our municipal sewage and stormwater system up to scratch?

Informed decisions for effective action

It's easy to point fingers and shift blame but it is impossible to make informed decisions without doing our homework. That's why, alongside our local knowledge, our next most important tool is monitoring. Water quality monitoring will take us leaps and bounds closer to understanding the risk and true causes of algal bloom in Haliburton County. We should be testing water quality regularly, and specifically after storms, high boating traffic weekends, just after the lakes thaw, after leaf fall in autumn... Only then can we make effective changes for the better. Informed, evidenced action will always trump clumsy reactions.

One example of the most common causes of algal bloom is stagnant water; that is why some prevention strategies employ large propellers or artificial oxygenation to combat it and keep water moving⁷. Light winds can expand existing blooms, pushing them to the shoreline while stronger winds can dissipate them. Agitated water makes it very difficult for a network of algae to form a bloom. However, implementing propellers where the true problem is nutrient runoff would be futile⁷.

In the same way, addressing nutrient release from lake sediment stirred by high boat traffic, or leaf decay in autumn with vast tree planting onshore will not fix the problem. We need to assess our situation with an open mind and take pragmatic steps towards properly studying and understanding our true environmental impact while keeping our local economy in mind.

Closing remarks

Toxic algal bloom is a global problem brought on by a multitude of factors. There is no simple fix, and we are fortunate to not have experienced any noteworthy events thus far. Prevention is a key strategic goal, both environmentally and economically, but this will only be achieved through proper water quality monitoring and using all the tools and local knowledge available to us to take rational and evidenced action.

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Haliburton Youth Wellness Hub offering connection, support

SUE TIFFIN

Staff Reporter

Isolation, disconnection from friends, nowhere to go and nothing to do.

People of all ages are dealing with the stresses of a stay-at-home-order during the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, but it's these specific challenges that Mary Sisson, manager of the Haliburton Youth Wellness Hub, said are affecting the younger population in Haliburton County and leading to higher levels of anxiety, depression and substance use.

"As an agency, we have noticed the difference from the initial lockdown in that, initially, we weren't getting a lot of crisis calls or calls for Quick Access consults," said Sisson, of her experience through Point in Time, Centre for Children, Youth and Parents, a partner on the youth hub. "Folks seemed to be doing OK and just trying to figure out what works for them in the 'new normal.' As time went on, numbers of referrals went up and now we are certainly seeing the affect on mental health that this pandemic is having. For some, the challenges have been working in octomesters (in high school), online learning, lack of in-person contact has heightened their isolation and research is showing that those that experienced mental health challenges pre-pandemic are experiencing a much harder time during the pandemic."

The Youth Hub – a space that was much-needed as a place for people to spend time with friends and access supports easily in one place according to Haliburton County's youth – had a grand opening just a month before the pandemic shut down the province last year.

"Before COVID-19 began, we had a steady increase in attendance at The Hub and increasing referrals to all of our services," said Sisson. "COVID-19 has been challenging for everyone. We are seeing a decline in numbers due to lockdown, challenges with transportation, and connectivity."

Programs and services were adapted to ensure that youth aged 12 to 25 could connect and feel supported even as the province went through pandemic-related restrictions.

At the Hub, Share and Care times, in which youth can meet safely outside and pick up essentials like snacks, gift cards for food, gas or data, toiletries, personal protective equipment, information resources and check in with someone about employment supports, housing, counselling or a referral to a nurse practitioner were set up on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., and on Wednesdays from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Mobile Share and Cares that meet at public spaces outside in Haliburton, Minden, Wilberforce and Cardiff to help those unable to get to the Hub at those times have also been offered.

"We can also help people access food, laundry, and help them get connected to supports they may need," said Sisson.

At a virtual art hour once a week, on Tuesdays at 3:30 p.m., youth can spend time with other creative-minded participants to focus on creating a piece of work or staying motivated on a project.

Zee has been participating in that program, being into different mediums lately and experimenting with face painting.

"The art hour is important to me because it helps me decompress from the day and let's me be creative and show off the art I work so hard on. It gives me a chance to be social while still being a safe space," said Zee.

A coffee and tea hour offers a social time for youth to spend time together virtually in a safe space.

"Of course, COVID-19 has made providing programming and services challenging," said Sisson. "Though we assume youth are the most tech savvy, we also know that the teenage to early 20's brain needs face-to-face connection with peers and that connecting with peers is so important in development. Seeing people virtually is just not the same."

Transportation has also been a challenge for youth – as it was pre-pandemic.

"Transportation has been one of the most challenging – with lack of ability to provide transportation for programs which are important and can increase a young person's ability to connect with each other and make and maintain friendships," said Sisson. "It was challenging before, but before COVID-19 we could provide transportation after Hub programs, now we can't transport anyone."

And also, connectivity, and the lack of it for so many in the community has been a huge issue that Sisson said they've been counteracting through the "Are You In," support they need.



A virtual art hour hosted once a week by the Haliburton Youth Wellness Hub runs on Tuesdays at 3:30 p.m. and has been attended by local youth and artist, Zee. They have been into different mediums lately, and experimenting with face painting. /Submitted photo

“

We want people to know we're there for them and as an essential service we are here to provide the ongoing support they need.

— Mary Sisson

A photo of Sisson was posted on the Point in Time Facebook page last week, smiling under a mask and announcing that she and other Youth Hub staff were delivering phones to help youth and kids throughout the county connect to school and supports more easily.

The "Are You In" program, which is connecting students with cell phones with data or phone cards, is in partnership with United Way, City of Kawartha Lakes, Haliburton and District Lions Clubs, and local donors and volunteers. Students without access to phones or internet, can contact their school principal or Lindsay at Point in Time at 705-457-5345, ext. 301 for details.

Point in Time is also encouraging residents to join the Youth Advisory Committee to have a say in the development of programs and services at the Hub. Community hours and honorariums are available for those attending. The agency is also looking for youth Steering Committee members who are interested in getting involved.

Sisson said there has been news that Youth Wellness Hubs in Ontario will be given permanent funding from The Ministry of Health and The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH).

"With this ongoing funding, all Hubs, including Haliburton will be adding five core services," she said. "This will include a full-time nurse practitioner, intake coordinator, care coordinator, addiction and mental health clinician and peer support worker. Along with these five positions we will be hiring an individual placement support worker, who will deliver an employment integration program."

Work is being done to provide more in-person services at the Hub – especially due to increased needs, said Sisson, and hours of operation will be increased, providing at least 40 hours of service a week as well as evenings and Saturdays.

"We want people to know we're there for them and as an essential service we are here to provide the ongoing support they need," she said.



Students are encouraged to embrace their artistic side during a virtual art hour at the Haliburton Youth Wellness Hub on Tuesday afternoons

Point in Time and the Youth Wellness Hub are offering all core services, including Quick Access clinic where people can be seen within a week or two; child and family therapy; therapy; parent support; youth justice services; early intervention (ages 0 to six); sleep consultation; respite coordination, as well as virtual programs including parenting groups and the Home Alone Program, which teaches kids over 10 the skills they need to be at home alone. The Young Warriors and Mindfulness Martial Arts programs are virtually starting in February. The crisis service runs from Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. "If you are struggling or just not quite sure what you need or what to do, please reach out and we will do our very best to help you," said Sisson.

For more information about the Haliburton County Youth Hub, visit HaliCountyYouthHub on Instagram and Facebook for programming and events information, or contact Mary Sisson at marys@pointintime.ca or Becca McClure at Beccam@pointintime.ca. A website is available at <https://www.pointintime.ca/youth/haliburton-youth-wellness-hub/>.

At this time, phone and virtual meetings and sessions are encouraged when possible, though some face-to-face meetings can happen if necessary, with protocols in place.



Exotic animal bylaw being considered for HE

DARREN LUM
Staff Reporter

The following are Highlands East council briefs from the Jan. 19 meeting held virtually on YouTube.

The recent attempts to start a roadside zoo with exotic animals on Peterson Road in neighbouring Hastings Highlands is drawing attention for how residents there are raising concerns and has led to Highlands East expanding its animal control bylaws to include exotic animals.

From her monthly staff report, township bylaw enforcement officer Kristen Boylan presented potential issues that face the township without such a bylaw to address complaints and concerns related to exotic animal ownership. As it stands, the township has no enforcement options.

“In this situation there is nothing to stop anyone from bringing in say, lion cubs, bears, pythons. Things along those lines into our municipality because we have absolutely no way of having any enforcement should we receive any complaints,” she said.

The concern is also related to if such animals were to escape, she adds.

Boylan has consulted with neighbouring municipalities.

Although Haliburton County does not have an exotic animal bylaw, Boylan referenced the town of Huntsville, who enacted a exotic pet bylaw in 2019.

“I basically took the copy of their schedule and what they included as prohibited animals. So what they did is they actually worked in correlation with Zoocheck,” she said. The schedule refers to a list of prohibited animals classified as animals that were being listed on the CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species), or in provincial and national legislation as threatened, endangered, or a species of concern

Per Zoocheck, it is a “Canadian-based, international wildlife protection charity started in 1984 to promote and protect the interests and well-being of wild animals.”

The township voted unanimously to draft an exotic animal bylaw to regulate and/or license, or prohibit ownership. The other choices were to do nothing or repeal the current bylaw for dogs and draft an inclusive bylaw for dogs and exotic animals with a related list of species.

Before the vote, councillors offered their

perspectives. Coun. Suzanne Partridge said she agreed with prohibition, but wasn’t sure about hybrid animals because of her past ownership of one. She wondered about how animals would be identified, if genetic testing needed to be performed. Boylan said more investigation is required.

Deputy Mayor Cec Ryall said he didn’t want dogs and exotic animals included together when it came to bylaw enforcement. He adds cats are being overlooked in this discussion.

“Is it an exotic animal or is it a domestic animal? And, if so, would it follow the same guidelines as a dog or would it be under the executive exotic species,” he said.

He pointed out he’s fielded lots of domestic cat complaints.

“I have more complaints about cats than I do with exotic animals. I think it’s an issue we should take up and I’m not in favour of putting the two together,” he said.

Coun. Cam McKenzie asked what would happen to exotic animals currently owned and housed by residents in the municipality. He wondered whether they would be “grandfathered in,” if a bylaw was added. Boylan said looking to other municipalities with exotic animal bylaws and how they handled the situation will be considered. The first thing is to gain a better picture of the township, she said.

“Maybe there is a way we could at least be made aware to know where these animals are and what these animals are to go forth,” she said.

Record number of service calls

2020 was a record year for the Highlands East Fire Department, who went out to 324 service calls, said fire chief Chris Baughman during his monthly operations report for December.

Baughman said in 2020 the department record number of calls “certainly kept the department busy with emergency responses, training and meetings were and continue to be greatly affected by the COVID pandemic. In person training and practice nights were altered to keep the responders as safe as possible while still providing emergency response coverage to the municipality.”

With completed professional train-

ing, department has five more certified 2021. fire fighters. Four more fire fighters are enrolled for training to add to the five for



Municipality of Dysart et al
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Fax: 705.457.1964
Website: www.dysartetal.ca

NOTICE OF VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT

- **DATE:** Wednesday, February 10th 2021
- **TIME:** 11:00 am.
- **LOCATION:** The Committee of Adjustment will be held as an electronic meeting only. The meeting will be recorded through the conferencing application and live streamed to YouTube.

APPLICATIONS:

1. D13-MV-2020-018- Ide
 - The following variance is requested to construct a single family dwelling with a decreased minimum water setback on a lot in the R1 zone:
 - a) A decrease to the provisions of Section 5.2 to permit a single family dwelling in the Urban Residential Type 1 (R1) zone to have a minimum water setback of 16.7 metres (55 feet) as opposed to the required minimum of 30 metres (98.4 feet).
 - Location: Lot 19, Concession 8, Lot 2, Plan 602 in the geographic Township of Dysart, in the Municipality of Dysart et al, in the County of Haliburton (Lakeview Street).
2. D13-2020-019- Malchenko
 - The following variances are requested to permit the construction of a seasonal dwelling and deck on a lot in the WR4 zone:
 - a) An increase to the provisions of Section 3.7(a) to permit a deck attached to a main building to extend into a the east interior side lot line setback 3.2 metres (10.5 feet) as opposed to required minimum of 0 metres (0 feet).
 - b) A decrease to the provisions of Section 5.2 to permit a seasonal dwelling to have an west interior lot line setback of 1.67 metres (5.4 feet) as opposed to the required 4.5 metres (14.7 feet).
 - c) An increase to the provisions of Section 5.2 to permit a seasonal dwelling to have a maximum structure height of 12.86 metres (42.2 feet) as opposed to the required 9.5 metres (31.2 feet).
 - Location: Plan 484, Lot 39 in the geographic Township of Dudley, in the Municipality of Dysart et al, in the County of Haliburton (1747 Trappers Trail)
3. D13-MV-2021-003- Gardens of Haliburton Inc
 - The following variances are requested to permit a parking aisle to be 4 metres for a medium density dwelling, to be used for retirement housing staff parking on a lot located in the R3-8 zone:
 - a) A variance to the provisions of Section 5.4.15.8 to permit a lot in the R3-8 zone to have a minimum parking aisle width of 4 metres (13.12 feet), as opposed to the minimum required 6 metres (19.68 feet) as approved by By-law 2008-63.
 - Location: Part Lots 16 and 17, Concession 8, Part Lots 1 and 7, Lots 2 and 8, Block 2, Plan 1, Part Lot 2, Lots 3 and 4, Block 6, Plan 1, Parts 1 to 3 and 7, 19R-8809 in the geographic Township of Dysart, in the Municipality of Dysart et al, in the County of Haliburton (Sunnyside Street).

Council passed By-law 2020-69 to amends the Committee of Adjustment of the Municipality of Dysart et al's Procedural By-law to permit electronic participation in meetings. **There will not be an in-person meeting; this meeting will be conducted in an electronic format only.**

For more information about electronic meetings and public participation in an electronic meeting, contact the Secretary-Treasurer at jiles@dysartetal.ca .

ANY PERSON is entitled to attend the hearing to express his/her views about these applications or may be represented by an agent for that purpose. If you do not attend the hearing the Committee may proceed in your absence and you will not be entitled to any further notice of the proceedings. The Committee will accept oral and written submissions. **A copy of the decision will be sent to the applicant, the agent and to each person who has filed with the Secretary Treasurer a written request for notice of the decision.**

FURTHER INFORMATION: including specific information about the zone provisions affected by each application, and electronic meeting process is available from the Planning and Land Information Department at the Municipal Office by appointment only (8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday) or by phoning 705-457-1740.

Jeff Iles
Secretary-Treasurer, Committee of Adjustment

New Cases Reported Today							
1	15	7					
Haliburton	KawarthaLakes	Northumberland					
Total Confirmed Cases to Date *							
47	408	363	818				
Haliburton (HAL)	Kawartha Lakes (CKL)	Northumberland (NTH)	HKPRDHU				
Note: *Total cases by County and for the Health Unit overall may increase or decrease from previously reported counts as cases may be reassigned to or from the HKPRDHU based on case investigation details and routine data cleaning.							
COVID-19 Contacts, Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths by County *							
County	Cases Not Resolved	Cases Resolved	Current High-Risk Contacts	Current Probable Cases	Hospitalizations (Total to date)	Deaths among Confirmed Cases	Deaths among Probable Cases
Haliburton	5	42	13	0	2	0	0
Kawartha Lakes	68	314	74	2	21	26	13
Northumberland	26	331	52	0	8	6	0
COVID-19 Contacts, Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths, HKPRDHU							
All Counties	Cases Not Resolved	Cases Resolved	Current High-Risk Contacts	Current Probable Cases	Hospitalizations (Total to date)	Deaths among Confirmed Cases	Deaths among Probable Cases
HKPRDHU	99	687	152 **	2	31	32	13

One new case of COVID-19 wa reported in Haliburton County on Jan. 25 by the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit. In Haliburton County there are five unresolved cases and 13 current high-risk contacts. For more information, visit www.hkpr.on.ca. / Screenshot taken from the HKPRD health unit website

Seniors finding balance in fitness during Friday group

SUE TIFFIN
Staff Reporter

For three years, Jim Hicks has been enjoying Balanced Fitness classes – a program that combines gentle seated and standing strength, balance and movement exercises – in the auditorium of

Minden’s Hyland Crest. The classes are important for Hicks, who has a drop foot and wears a brace, and wants to be extra cautious when walking, especially in the winter.

“I am 90 now, and for sure, I want to do all I can to prevent a fall,” he said. “Half of [the class] is done from a chair, and then if you are able, the second half is standing. I usually end up doing half the standing portion while sitting. There is no pressure – you just do what you can.”

Before most people had ever heard of COVID-19, regular one-hour Balanced Fitness classes offered through Haliburton Highlands Health Services took place twice-weekly in Minden, Haliburton and Wilberforce bringing participants together for a free exercise class to help maintain health and improve strength and balance to prevent falls, but also to feel good during a social event.

“Some days we would have five individuals and other days we would have 30,” said Jamie Allen-Russell, the class instructor for more than two years now. “Numbers [of participants] were growing quickly at the Minden location prior to the pandemic.”

And then, when the world shut down due to the spread of the novel coronavirus, so too did in-person classes that seniors in the community had relied on, creating a gap for participants who benefited from the social and physical aspects of the classes at a time when staying home meant they might be feeling lonelier and less active.

“As a community support service provider we recognize the community’s need for social and physical engagement – they are key components to health and well-being,” said Allen-Russell. “Individuals in the community were missing their weekly exercise routine, their social gathering and their motivation to get out and get involved.”

And so, in the fall last year, classes resumed in a way they never had before – online.

“Individuals were getting used to the ‘new norm’ and how things worked virtually,” said Allen-Russell. “Phone calls were made and emails were sent out about the possibility of resuming our balanced fitness class but the classes would have to occur virtually.”

Things started off slow, said Allen-Russell, with just one to three participants, but each week more participants have joined in.

“Connectivity is an issue for many seniors in our community – both with respect to access to devices and basic internet as well as comfort level,” said Allen-Russell. “We were able to work together and figure out a process that worked for everyone by just clicking on one link. Getting used to something new is a challenge for anyone, especially when it comes to technology. Once everyone got ahold of what to do it was smooth sailing. Participants are very much enjoying the classes and some have been asking for more classes and video recorded to do at home.”

Allen-Russell stressed that the process to join isn’t as hard as it might sound, and is quite simple to get set up.

“If you have the internet than you can have Balanced Fitness live classes every Friday,” said Allen-Russell. “There are no requirements to join the classes and participants are fully encouraged to take part to the best of their ability. There is no skill level required and modifications are made to meet the needs of all the participants.”

The online classes mean that Hicks

can continue to build strength, feel better, and connect with those in his class. “I’m sure that these exercises have kept me stronger and feeling better, especially during these ‘stay home’ days,” he said. “I recommend them very highly.”

For Allen-Russell too, it’s a unique experience in her almost-15 years of experience being a seniors’ fitness instructor.

“Our in-person balanced fitness classes were a very social part of our lives prior to the pandemic,” she said. “Some individuals would even arrive 45 minutes to an hour early to help set-up, chit chat and spend time together. Each class started with updates, new information, stories, and of course, a joke.”

“They are the best,” said participant Karen Vick. “I find as far as exercising I get more out of them because I can stay focused. Miss the social aspect of the group. I do LOVE to talk.”

Vick implored Allen-Russell to keep the classes going.

“You do an awesome job,” she said. “I thought walking was enough but it’s not. Need what you are doing for stretch and balance.”

Kathy Gartshore agreed that the class helps round out the benefits of other exercise.

“I know the exercises help with all aspects of movement,” she said. “Walking is great for you but I need the exercise to go along with the walking, and I love who teaches us.”

Linda Schrader also applauded the program, as well as Allen-Russell as the group’s instructor.

“The exercise class is great,” she said. “This free program offered has lots of good benefits for us as we age. It helps me with balance and strength. Jamie does an excellent job with lots of motivation, care and fun. It’s provided me with new friendships as well as keeping me mobile.”

It hasn’t always been easy for Allen-Russell to adapt a class that began in-person to one that’s held online.

“Without my participants physically with me makes it quite challenging to be myself as a person,” said Allen-Russell. “Let’s face it, it’s not easy talking to a computer. With so many screens open to watch, a class to instruct and to be the only person in the room just isn’t the same.”

Seeing familiar faces again, though, makes it worthwhile for Allen-Russell, who said it fills a gap that was empty for many for several months.

When she logged on to the class on Jan. 14, Allen-Russell was joined by 16 participants, quite the increase from the first class.

“As a fitness leader and dedicated HHHS Community Support Service team member it makes me feel honoured and privileged to have such a great supportive group who continue to participate even behind a screen,” said Allen-Russell. “Being able to provide this service to our community is of great benefit to the health and well-being of so many individuals. For me, to see the smiles on everyone’s faces, to hear the laughter in the group, and to see the commitment to return weekly makes me feel that I am providing a much needed service to our community.”

Allen-Russell said she receives thank-you emails and texts after each class, thanking her for a great workout.

“Now that’s reassuring and satisfying,” she said.

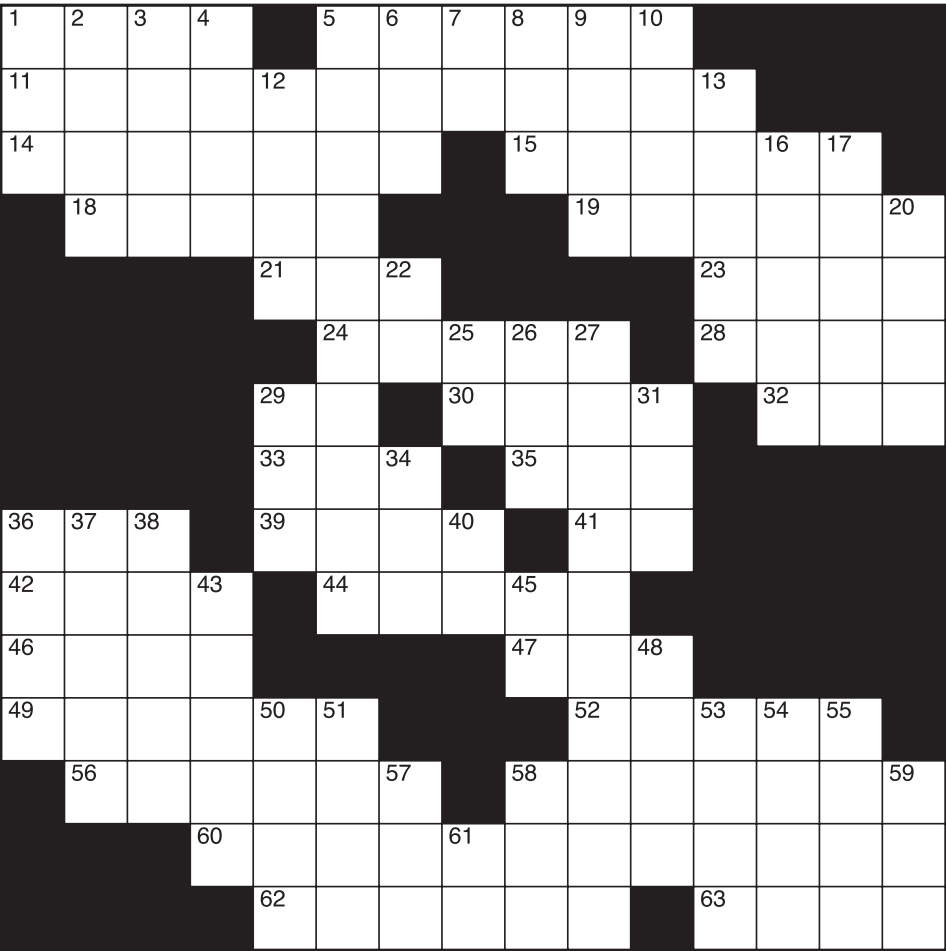
For more information about the classes, email jallen@hhhs.ca or call 705-457-5682 for more information.

Crossword brought to you by

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- CLUES ACROSS

1. One of Noah’s sons

5. Openings

11. Rising from the dead

14. Expressions for humorous effect

15. North American country

18. Flowed over

19. Tags

21. Long-lasting light bulb

23. Off-Broadway theater award

24. Khoikhoi peoples

28. Beloved movie pig

29. South Dakota

30. Tai language

32. Get free of

33. Afflict

35. Transmits genetic information from DNA

36. Commercials

39. Digits

41. Expression of sympathy

42. Bleats

44. Swiss Nobel Peace Prize winner

46. Vegetable

47. Turf
- CLUES DOWN

1. A title of respect in India

2. His and __

3. Employee stock ownership plan

4. A type of bond (abbr.)

5. Acting as if you are

6. Affirmative

7. Not caps

8. Type of medication

9. Monetary unit

10. Private school in New York

12. Small stream

13. A person of wealth

16. Exclude

17. Someone who vouches for you

20. Vegetable part

22. Gov’t lawyer

25. Term to address a woman

26. Swiss river

27. About senator

29. __ Paulo, city

31. Native American tribe

34. “Titanic” actor

36. Campaign for students’ rights (abbr.)

37. Capital of Senegal

38. Slang for military leader

40. Football’s big game

43. Women who threw themselves on funeral pyres

45. Equally

48. Forest animal

50. Heavy stoves

51. Releasing hormone (abbr.)

53. Song

54. Type of pickle

55. Offer in return for money

57. Soviet Socialist Republic

58. Burns wood (abbr.)

59. Beloved singer Charles

61. Three-toed sloth

Answers on page 17

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400 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY



Haliburton Youth Wellness Hub Care Coordinator (Full Time / Permanent)

Under the direction of the YWH Manager, working within the context of a multidisciplinary team, the Care Coordinator will, in collaboration with youth and their families, assess care needs, determine eligibility for services, and develop individual care and service plans and is passionate about making sure every stone is overturned in order to help youth get the service and supports they require. Membership, in good standing, with the applicable regulatory body: College of Psychotherapists of Ontario, Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers. 2+ years of recent experience in community health or a related field. Knowledge of the health care delivery system and community resources.

We welcome and strongly encourage employment of persons with lived experiences, economic challenges, from First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, people of all ages, ancestry, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, faith, creed, disability, family status, marital status, all genders and sexual orientation.

Please visit **www.pointintime.ca** for a detailed job description.

Send resume by February 12, 2021 to:
Mary Sisson, Youth Wellness Hub Manager **marys@pointintime.ca**
or Point in Time Centre for Children, Youth and Parents
P.O. Box 1306, 69 Eastern Avenue, Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0
Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0

400 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY



Haliburton Youth Wellness Hub Peer Support Worker (Full Time / Permanent)

Under the direction of the Youth Wellness Hub Manager and alongside a coordinated service team, the Peer Support Worker will provide support to youth who access services and recreation at the Haliburton County Youth Hub. They will support and assist in creating a safe and accepting environment for youth (12-25) with a special emphasis on the LGBTQ, Indigenous youth and other marginalized community youth. Supports and services provided at the Youth Hub include, but are not limited to, mental health, addictions, employment, housing, primary care and outreach. Good communication/interpersonal skills, education or volunteer/work experience in social services or related field, knowledge of anti-oppression and inclusion including knowledge of supporting LGBTQ+ youth and creating positive spaces, knowledge of youth engagement principles and practice is an asset, knowledge of Haliburton community, community resources and the Youth Hub is an asset.

We welcome and strongly encourage employment of persons with lived experiences, economic challenges, from First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, people of all ages, ancestry, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, faith, creed, disability, family status, marital status, all genders and sexual orientation.

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Mary Sisson, Youth Wellness Hub Manager **marys@pointintime.ca**
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Only successful applicants will be contacted



Haliburton Youth Wellness Hub Intake Coordinator/Reception Full Time / Permanent

Under the direction of the Youth Wellness Hub Manager, the Intake Coordinator/Receptionist is responsible for helping create an inclusive, welcoming culture for youth 12-25, booking appointments, receiving and processing external referrals, reception duties, providing administrative support to management and staff, maintaining the Dacima database and EMHware and clinical records and generating reports. High School education (Grade 12); 1-3 years related experience working in mental health or related field; Human Service diploma an asset.

We welcome and strongly encourage employment of persons with lived experiences, economic challenges, from First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, people of all ages, ancestry, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, faith, creed, disability, family status, marital status, all genders and sexual orientation.

Please visit **www.pointintime.ca** for a detailed job description.

Send resume by February 5, 2021 to:
Mary Sisson, Youth Wellness Hub Manager
marys@pointintime.ca

or
Point in Time Centre for Children, Youth and Parents
P.O. Box 1306, 69 Eastern Avenue
Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0



Haliburton Youth Wellness Hub Mental Health and Addictions Clinician (Full Time / Permanent)

Under the direction of the YWH Manager, working within the context of a multidisciplinary team, the Clinician will provide therapeutic interventions and addiction/harm reduction supports to youth, ages 12-25, dealing with addictions and substance use, based on evidenced-based practices. Using a client-centered approach, the Clinician will conduct mental health assessments and provide therapeutic supports and/or interventions to youth, including but not limited to solution-focused narrative therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, dialectical behavior therapy, and motivational interviewing. This can include a whole spectrum of supports and services from referrals with the hub, to external providers, and involve direct support and treatment from harm reduction to withdrawal support and relapse prevention services. Bachelor/Masters of Social Work, Psychology, or related degree, with a postgraduate certificate in Addictions and Mental Health, or an equivalent combination of work experience and education. Current Certificate of Registration with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW); or current registration with The College of Psychotherapy. Minimum 2 years' experience working in a related position preferred, ideally in a community-based setting. Valid First Aid & CPR certificate or willingness to obtain.

We welcome and strongly encourage employment of persons with lived experiences, economic challenges, from First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, people of all ages, ancestry, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, faith, creed, disability, family status, marital status, all genders and sexual orientation.

Please visit **www.pointintime.ca** for a detailed job description.

Send resume by February 12, 2021 to:
Mary Sisson, Youth Wellness Hub Manager **marys@pointintime.ca**
or Point in Time Centre for Children, Youth and Parents
P.O. Box 1306, 69 Eastern Avenue, Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0

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400 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

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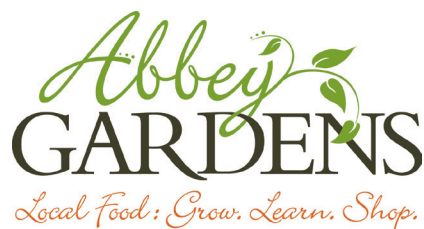
If you are motivated and enthusiastic, please forward your resume to:

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or mail to P.O. Box 534,
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Only Successful applicants will be contacted

400 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY @ ABBEY GARDENS DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

We are currently seeking an experienced Director of Operations and Strategic Initiatives to work with staff and Board members in achieving our goals.

This is a full time position, reporting to the Board of Directors, to provide leadership to the Abbey Gardens team of managers and part-time/seasonal staff.

Responsibilities Include: financial management, planning & development, nurturing partnerships, human resources, marketing & communications, and overseeing strategic initiatives.

For full job description please go to

<https://abbeygardens.ca/get-involved/#jobs>

or contact bolin.barb@gmail.com for more information.

Applications can be submitted via email to bolin.barb@gmail.com
Deadline for applications: Feb.1, 2021

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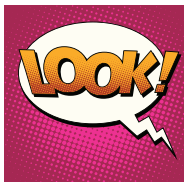
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When daylight fades.
To the land of long ago.
And memory paints the scenes of old,
In the gold of the twilight glow.
We seem to see in the soft dim light,
The faces we loved the best,
And think of them when the sun's last ray,
Goes down in the far off west.

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In Loving Memory of

Trevour Terrance Trantau

October 2, 1985 to January 19, 2021

Trevour left us far too early, aged 35, of natural causes. Trevour was predeceased by his parents Terrance and Sandy Trantau, and is survived by his devoted brother Timothy and beloved sister Jessica, dear partner Lisa Nimigon and her children Jordan, Dawson and Shelby, and his grandparents Bob and Joan Stinson.

Cremation has taken place. A celebration of Trevour's life will be held when we are able to gather as a group.

If desired, donations in Trevour's memory to the 4Cs Food Bank (www.haliburton4cs.org) would be appreciated and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

INSIDE
THIS WEEK:

RESTAURANTS BUTT OUT
As restaurants give non-smokers a breath
of fresh air, health unit seeks county ban

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE
Performance of Letters I Didn't Send bodes
well for future of Northern Lights Pavilion

BIRD SPECIES UP
The annual Minden Christmas Bird Count
yielded some fascinating sightings

www.haliburtonecho.on.ca
email: echo@halhinet.on.ca

THE ECHO

HALIBURTON COUNTY

Tuesday, January 21, 2003
Vol. 120 No. 7
\$1 including GST

Canoe route rules:

Funding allows Frost Centre group to better protect environment

MARTHA PERKINS
Editor

Canoeists who pull ashore at a campsite in the Frost Centre this summer may find there are more rules but the campsites will be cleaner and less likely to be sources of pollution.

With a grant from provincial government and a land use permit from Algonquin Highlands, the Haliburton Highlands Water Trails Committee is embarking on a two-year project to manage the dozens of campsites at the province's 24,000-hectare property south of Dorset.

The first step was to hire Mark Coleman as the project co-ordinator to oversee how the \$200,000 from Ontario Living Legacy is spent. The committee received \$50,000 for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002 and \$150,000 for the next fiscal year. On Thursday, Algonquin Highlands council gave it the authority it needs to spend the money. The land use permit agreement will be forwarded to the municipality as soon as possible, the last piece of red tape needed.

Although canoeists will continue to be able to use the campsites for free, and not have to reserve spaces, they will have to comply with new rules about how many campers are allowed per site as posted on new signs.

For its part, the committee will improve the existing rudimenta-

See **Committee** page 13



DARREN LUM/Echo

Winter warmth

Dakota Harris-Saxby, a John D. Hodgson Elementary School student, smiles, barely noticing the frigid weather as she slides down a playground set during the lunch hour recess. Friends Victoria Snow and Jasmin Purnell ready themselves to take a ride down the slide. The entire province has been gripped in the throngs of a cold weather snap for the last month.

Waterfront property demand heats up real estate market

SHERYL LOUCKS
Staff Reporter

A shortage of property on the Haliburton market means real estate agents have more buyers than sellers.

John Parish, a Bowes and Cocks agent, says 2002 was one of the best years in his memory for sales and activity in the Highlands. He says they are running into a shortage of "product" though and not just waterfront either.

"It's still manageable right now but it could become a problem," says Parish.

Linda Baumgartner, Re/Max agent and incoming president of the Ontario Real Estate Association, says it has been a high-dollar volume of sales and a very prosperous year. She expects the real estate market will remain healthy for 2003 as well but is predicting prices will not continue to rise in the Highlands as they have been.

She has noticed the expected demand for residential and cottage waterfront properties but noticed in 2002 a new demand for acreages as well. She has also noticed buyers coming from a bit farther south than the usual number from the Greater Toronto Area with quite a few expressing interest from the Hamilton area.

"Percentage wise we're seeing baby boomers the most but it's the last leg of the boomers. We are working with mid-30-year-olds who are looking at future retirement properties. They're buying run down cottages, with

See **Future** page 13

FEATURE

1998 TJ JEEP
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\$185. BI-WEEKLY*

2001 DODGE RAM 2500 LARAMIE SLT 4X4
Stock #103 CCA, fully equipped, Cummins diesel, pw, pdl, tilt, cruise, heated mirrors, am/fm/cd, 56,000km.

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Stock #1991, V6, 2 dr, pw, pdl, pm, air, am/fm/cass, keyless entry, 60,000kms, \$225. bi-weekly*

1999 JEEP CHEROKEE
Stock #1985, 6 cyl, pw, pdl, pm, cruise, tilt, am/fm/cass, only 72,000kms.
\$205. bi-weekly*

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FEATURE

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